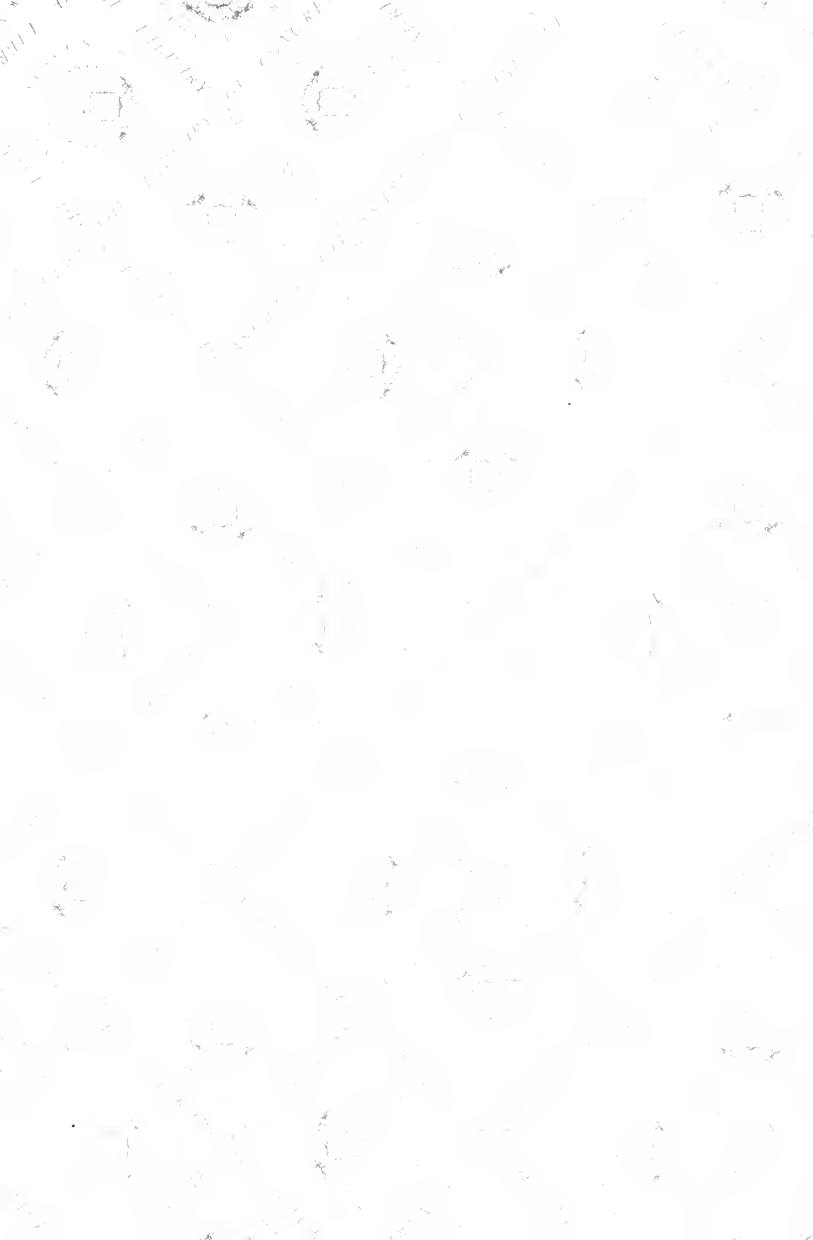


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THE RIGHT HON. LORD AVERSTONE, G.C.M.G., P.C.
Lord Chief Justice of England

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No. 279

The Strokes and Science of Lawn Tennis



BY

P. A. VAILE

AUTHOR OF

"Modern Lawn Tennis," "Great Lawn Tennis Players,"

"Swerve, or the Flight of the Ball," &c.

PUBLISHED BY

THE AMERICAN SPORTS PUBLISHING CO.

21 Warren Street, New York

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Aug 23. 1906
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TO

THE RIGHT HON. LORD ALVERSTONE, G.C.M.G., P.C.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF ENGLAND,

WHO TAKES A DEEP INTEREST IN THE GAME



We reprint in this issue of Spalding's Athletic Library, with permission of the publishers, the British Sports Publishing Company, Ltd., 2 and 3 Hind Court, Fleet Street, London, England, the contents of a copyrighted book issued by them, "The Strokes and Science of Lawn Tennis," by P. A. Vaile. Mr. Vaile is a leading English authority on the game and is thoroughly familiar with his subject. The book has had a very large sale in Great Britain and has been pronounced by experts to be the best work of its kind ever published. The difference between the English and American styles of play should make it of interest to every player.

AMERICAN SPORTS PUBLISHING CO.

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PREFACE

THERE have been written many books on Lawn Tennis, but few, if any, whose price is within the means of the ordinary player show clearly the manner in which the most important strokes in the game should be produced.

The object of this book is to set out clearly by letterpress and diagram-photograph the manner in which all the best strokes of the game are produced. In nearly every case the start, impact, and finish of the stroke is given. This and the accompanying explanation should enable any one to learn the strokes without difficulty.

I have been compelled to illustrate these strokes myself, for there is no player in England who plays them. Here and there one finds a person who uses one or two of them, but it would, in a work of this nature, be obviously impossible to collect photographs of a great number of different players.

These strokes are not here laid down as being the most perfect because I play them so. They are the most natural and effective strokes known, and are the result of the experience of practically all the most famous players in the world, except Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty. This statement I shall refer to later on.

It is confidently anticipated that this book will prove of great assistance, not only to beginners but to those players who, on account of their defective hold of the racket, cannot produce the best Lawn Tennis strokes.

My first book on the game, *Modern Lawn Tennis*, was published in June, 1904. Those who have followed the game closely know how thoroughly and conclusively the faults in English tactics and strokes therein dealt with were demonstrated at the 1905 tournament, when an American lady won the Ladies' singles championship and an Australian player the All-comers' singles, and Renshaw cup.

These faults still to a large extent exist, and we shall be lucky if we succeed in retaining here those championships which we now hold. I regard it as practically a certainty, unless our methods are changed, that we shall lose all our honours in the Lawn Tennis competitions.

Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty are the only two English players who stand out by themselves on the result of the championship tournament, and in my opinion they were well served by the unfair condition which exempts them from playing through the draw. This should be abolished forthwith, for it is un-English and unsportsmanlike, and gives the holder a most undue advantage.

I must not, however, forget to mention Mr. S. H. Smith's grand display against the American champion, Mr. Holcombe Ward. His driving and return of the service that day were probably the finest that have ever been seen on a court, and his great match against Mr. N. E. Brookes in the final of the All-comers' singles, in which he led at "Two sets all 4-2," will not readily be forgotten.

Apart from these cases, the general standard of the English game was not high. I attribute this particularly to the defective hold of the racket most in vogue here. I am therefore glad to have had the opportunity of writing this book, and showing the natural holds and strokes played nearly everywhere except in England; for it stands to reason that a book of this nature must have a very much larger circulation than expensive works can possibly have, and my aim is to increase the knowledge and popularity of the game as much as possible.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GAME.

LAWN TENNIS is played by two or four persons. When two persons play the game is called a men's or ladies' single, as the case may be. When four men play it is a men's double ; if four ladies in America, it is a women's, in England a ladies' double. When a lady and a man play a similarly constituted pair it is called a mixed double. Sometimes, but rarely, one person plays two, but this is not really recognised as a game.

The size of the court for the single game is 78 feet by 27 feet, and for the double game 78 feet by 36 feet. It is marked out as shown in Fig. 1.

The game is played with rackets and balls, and consists of a series of rests, or, as they are sometimes called, rallies. A rest consists of the period of play which ensues consequent on any one service. From the time a good service leaves the racket of the server until the ball is dead constitutes a rest.

The court is divided at the middle by a net, which runs across it parallel with the base lines. The ball is knocked from one side of the net to the other until one side fails to return it into the opposite court. Either side scores an ace when the opposing side fails to return the ball into their opponents' court. This ace may be gained by one's opponent failing to hit the ball, by his

hitting it into the net or out of the opposite court. The object of the game is therefore to place or drive the ball into the court of your opponent in such a manner as to prevent him returning it into your own court.

The first player to hit the ball is called the server. He throws the ball up and hits it into the service court diagonally opposite to him. After this service is delivered each side must strike the ball alternately, hitting it either before it touches the ground, in which case the stroke is called a volley, or after it has struck the ground once. In the latter case the hit is called a ground-stroke. As will be seen later on, one may not volley the service. If he does it counts an ace to his opponent. All other balls may be either volleyed or played off the ground.

The method of scoring is peculiar. The value of the aces is exactly the same; if anything, perhaps the later ones are the most valuable, yet they are assigned different numerical values. Many efforts and suggestions to alter the system of scoring have been made, but none has met with favour at the hands of lawn-tennis players.

The first point or ace won for either side is called 15, and if each side wins one of the first two points, the score is called "15 all." The server's score is always called first, so that the score would in the case above quoted be "15-love," or "love-15," and then "15 all," according to whether the server or his opponent wins the first stroke. "Love" in tennis scoring, and indeed in most game scoring, means "nothing." Why this word of all others was chosen to express "nothing" I do not know. A learned professor has classed love as the greatest thing in the world.

If the server wins the first two strokes the score is "30-love."

If his opponent win the next one it is "30-15." If the server loses the next stroke the game is "30 all." It will thus be seen that the two first strokes are allotted an entirely arbitrary value of 15. The third stroke is assessed at 10, so that if after "30 all" has been called the server wins the next point, the score is called 40-30. Should the receiver or striker-out, as he is generally called, win the next point after "30 all," the score would be called 30-40.

Either side wins a game when four aces or points have been scored, unless each side wins three points, which makes "40 all," but is always called "deuce." When the score is at deuce it is necessary for either side to win two consecutive strokes before the game is won, so that once the score has come to deuce neither side can win by the result of one rest. If when the score is at deuce the server wins the next ace it is "vantage in." Should he then win the next, the game is his, but should he lose it, the game goes back to deuce, and both he and his opponent require to score two consecutive strokes before the game is won. It will thus be seen that if the score is "vantage in" the receiver must score three successive strokes to win. He wants one to bring it back to deuce, and then two successive ones to win. The game may thus go on indefinitely. As a matter of fact there are sometimes single games nearly as trying as an ordinary set, but this does not often occur, and I have never met the player who wanted to alter this system of scoring.

When the game is won the receiver becomes the server, and so on alternately. The score by games is called with the server's score first, or sometimes in matches with the name of the player who is ahead first. When the games are equal they

are called 1 all, 2 all, 3 all, and so on, but if it is even at 5 all this is deuce in games, and either side must win two games running before the set is won. The games are not called in scoring "deuce" or "vantage"; 5 all or 6-5 would be called, but the same rules apply as in the case of deuce and vantage in the game; for instance, if the score is 5-6 in a set, the server would require to win another game to bring the score to "6 all," and then he would have to win two more games consecutively before the set would go to him.

There is no hard-and-fast rule as to what constitutes a match. Practically anything decided upon by a tournament committee or agreed on by players makes a match. Ordinary matches are, however, generally reckoned on the result of three sets. Men's championship matches are generally decided by the best of five sets, the side which gets 3-2, 3-1, or 3-0 in sets winning. Ladies' championships and mixed doubles are nearly always decided by the best of three sets.

The server must always volley the ball—that is, hit it before it strikes the ground; but his opponent the striker-out, or receiver, as I prefer to call him, must wait until the ball has hit the ground before he can strike it.

THE COURT.

The game is played on a variety of courts; grass, sand, dirt, asphalt, concrete, wood and other substances being used. In my opinion grass is the only suitable court for the game, but this cannot always be obtained, so that in many places the substitutes mentioned are used.

In laying out a court one should allow plenty of room all round it, and although the court itself is only 78 feet by 36 feet, the ground on which it is laid out should be roughly 132 feet by 64 feet. This allows room for play all round the court. If one has much less there is danger of being cramped in playing one's strokes. A green background is always desirable. A painted wall or fence is good, but a live hedge protected by wire netting is preferable.

The court should be laid out so that the sun shall pass as nearly as may be across it in line with the net, the object being to avoid having the sun at any time facing down the court lengthways so as to interfere with the players, particularly in serving or overhead work.

In marking out a court you must be careful first of all to get your side line where you want it, and of course in line with any hedge or fence near it. When you have got your side line (A B, Fig. 2) your only trouble will be to get your right angle (A B D). The simplest way to do this is to remember that 3, 4, and 5 or any multiple thereof will give you a right angle. Put in a peg at C four feet from B. Let your assistant stand at B and hold the other end of the tape. Now measure out twelve feet of tape, that is the sum of 3, 4, and 5, and let him hold both ends of the tape at B. Pass the tape round the peg at C, noting carefully that the four feet are correctly shown at the peg. Keep the measure taut, take another peg and put it in at D, the corner of the triangle B C D made by stretching the tape tightly at the nine-foot mark. This will give you your right angle, so that all you have to do is to produce the line B D to E, B E measuring 36 feet. You can now measure 36 feet from A to F and draw your line E F 78 feet in length. Then

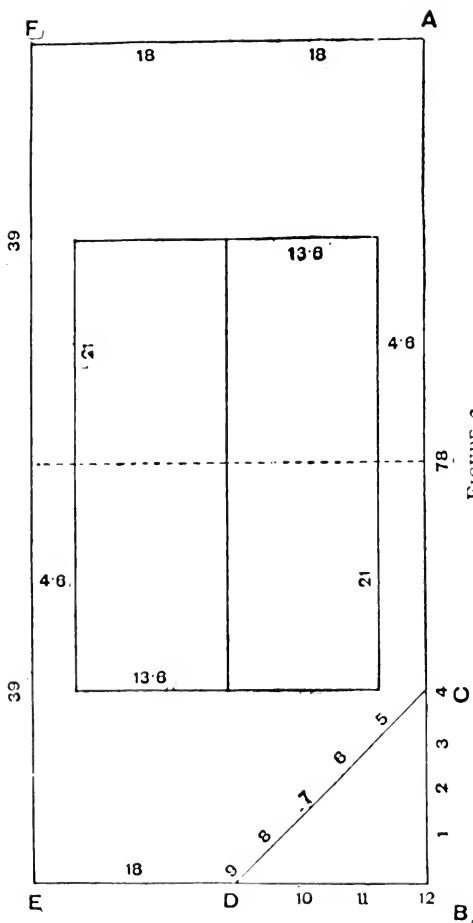


FIGURE 2.

Measurements in feet and inches. The triangle is not drawn to scale.

A F has to be drawn parallel to E B, and if you have both the lines A B and E F 78 feet in length you will be correct. It is a good plan to construct a square of laths on the formula given, and so test each corner.

The marking of the court shown here is really the correct marking for a double court, but it is rarely seen, as the court is generally used for both singles and doubles. Having once got your outside lines, the rest is simple, for every line on a lawn-tennis court is parallel with either the base lines or the side lines, and it is a mere matter of measuring; for instance, if you want to know where to put the net you measure 39 feet from the base line on each side line. If it is where to put the singles side line, you know that if you measure four feet six inches along the base line from the corner of the court, repeat the same operation at the other end of the court, and draw a line through both points, you must have your singles side line right, and so with all the other lines.

This is really a better method of marking out a court than that usually given of settling the position of the net and measuring two diagonals, as in that case a trifling error in your original line may throw your side line a foot or two out, so that it will not be parallel with some walk or hedge. This cannot happen with my method, for you work from your side line in the first instance.

IMPLEMENTS AND DRESS.

A beginner should always try to get some friend to assist in the choice of a racket. Cheap rackets are generally dear. Although a paradox, this is a sound statement. Do not buy

rubbish. You should get a good racket, and certainly not too tightly strung. A man should use a fourteen-ounce racket; for a lady, thirteen ounces will be found enough. In England $14\frac{1}{2}$ and $13\frac{1}{2}$ ounces are the weights generally used, but the strokes are not so quick as the American and Australasian shots. Heavy rackets make for slowness.

I am a great believer in knickerbockers for all athletic games. If lawn tennis is not an athletic game I do not know one. Trousers bind the knees. They are a little cooler certainly, but I am sure one can get about more quickly in knickerbockers. This, however, may be left to one's own inclination. It is of great importance that you should be lightly shod. The American says of his racehorses, "Better a stone on his back than an ounce on his heels." It is so with a man. The average player uses shoes that are much too heavy. Use the *lightest and lightest* shoe that you possibly can with comfort. You could play barefoot if you had to, and soon would. Accustom yourself, therefore, to the light shoe, and have it tight. This is of great importance in starting quickly. You cannot start quickly in a heavy, loose shoe. Do not be afraid to roll up your sleeves. In America even the ladies do it.

A lady player should always have a skirt so short and light that it doesn't impede her progress on the court. The light shoe is important to her, but she knows it, and generally has it.

THE GRIP OF THE RACKET.

This is a matter of the greatest importance to players, both to beginners and many who have played the game for years.

The English holds are in my opinion thoroughly unsound, and I blame them for the paucity of strokes in the game and for the lack of rising players. The prime essential of a good grip is that the forearm from elbow to wrist and the handle of the racket shall be in one and the same line at the moment the ball is struck. In some of the cut strokes illustrated it will seem as though this rule is violated, but it is not so, for, although there is shown in these pictures a decided angle, at the moment of impact the handle of the racket and the forearm are in the same straight line as regards the plane of the force, if I may use the term. To put it more plainly, if I am "cutting" a ball with a tennis racket or a tree with a small axe my arm is following down the line in which I desire to expend my force. The following photographs will illustrate very clearly the merits of the strokes advocated by me, and the demerits of those most prevalent in England to-day.

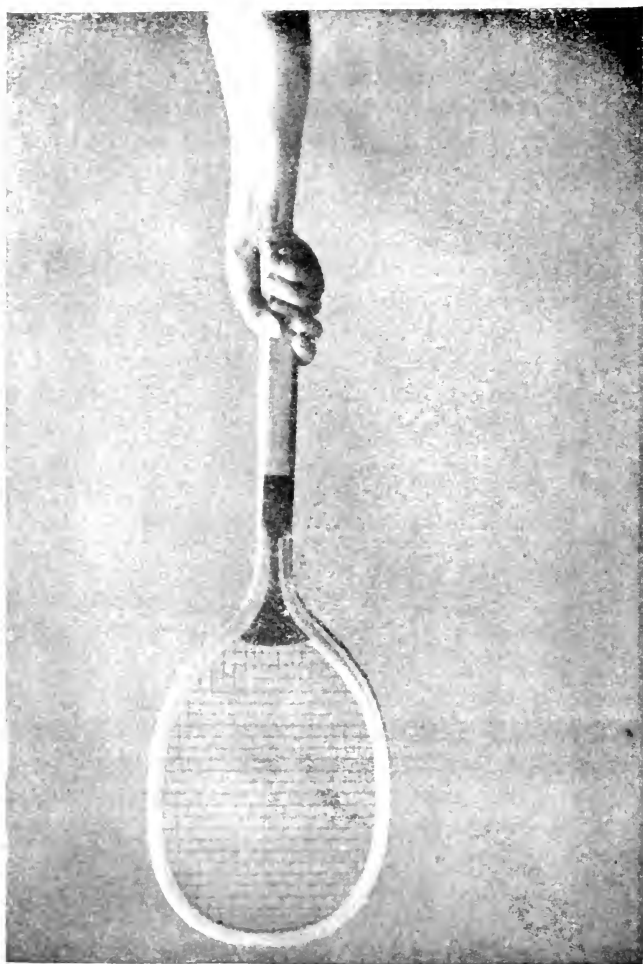


PLATE I.—FOREHAND GRIP.

PLATE I.—FOREHAND GRIP.

This is a strong natural hold, and shows clearly the position of hand, also the forearm and racket handle in the same line.

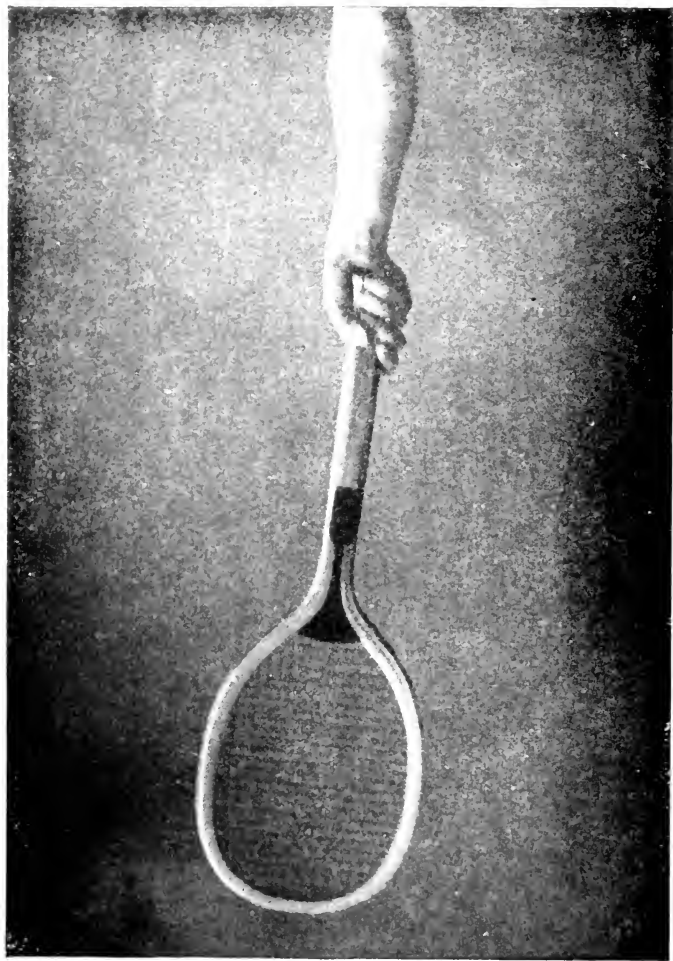


PLATE 2. OLD FOREHAND GRIP.

PLATE 2.—OLD FOREHAND GRIP.

This is the old forehand grip. It is still used by many players in America, and probably is to-day still the best grip in the game, as it allows absolute freedom to the wrist. Observe that in this hold the button or leather of the racket is held inside the hand. In plate 1 it protrudes and interferes with wrist work.



PLATE 3.—REMARKABLE FOREHAND GRIP.

PLATE 3.—REMARKABLE FOREHAND GRIP.

This is the grip that gives Miss Sutton her remarkable forehand drive. It will be seen that it carries out to a greater degree my advice about keeping the arm and the racket handle in the same straight line. This grip enables the player to hit upwards. Nearly all forehand shots, except the chops, are more accurately described as a sweeping movement than as hits. In this case, however, the ball is hit with a strong upward glancing blow, and the amount of pace that can be got, the height it can be driven above the net without going out of court, and the length of its bound are all strong points that make a consideration of this stroke worth the while of any player. Any remarkable development of the forehand drive will come from this stroke, which I am fully explaining later on. The hold is bad for low forehand volleys, and if used as an unchanged grip is bad, but it is indisputable that it has many virtues which have not yet even been considered. Mr. H. A. Parker, the New Zealand champion, uses the same grip, and gets a very fine stroke with it.

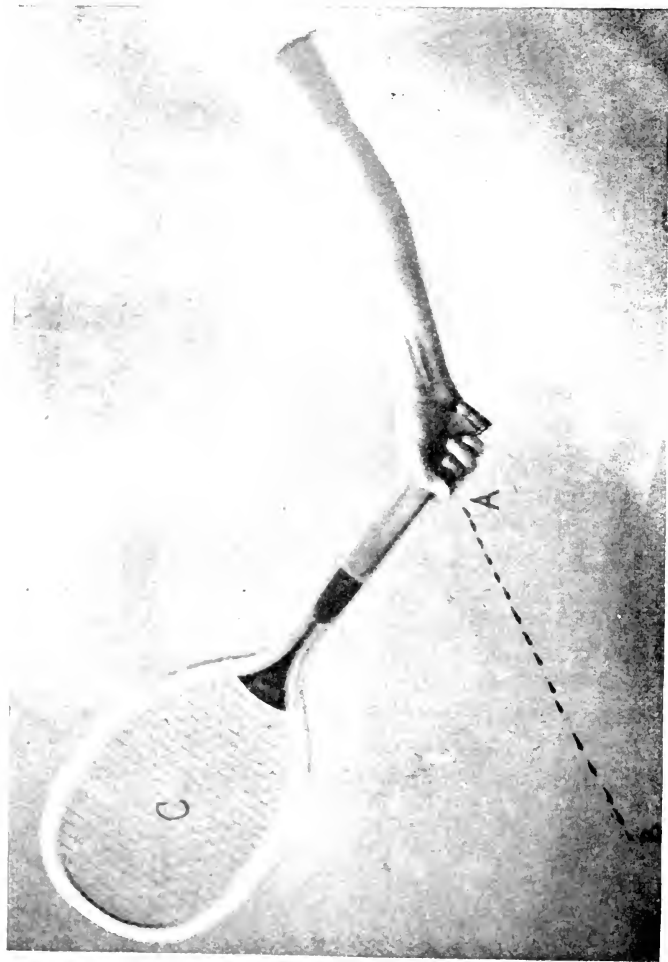


PLATE 4—ENGLISH FOREHAND GRIP.

PLATE 4. —ENGLISH FOREHAND GRIP.

It is apparent that the force which goes down the line A B is wanted at C. From A to C is unnecessary leverage on the wrist in its weakest position.



PLATE 5.—BACKHAND GRIP.

PLATE 5.—BACKHAND GRIP.

This plate shows a strong natural backhand grip with the thumb round the handle and the arm in line with the racket. Notice the button or leather protruding. Either this grip or the similar one with the button held within the palm is the most suitable for a beginner.

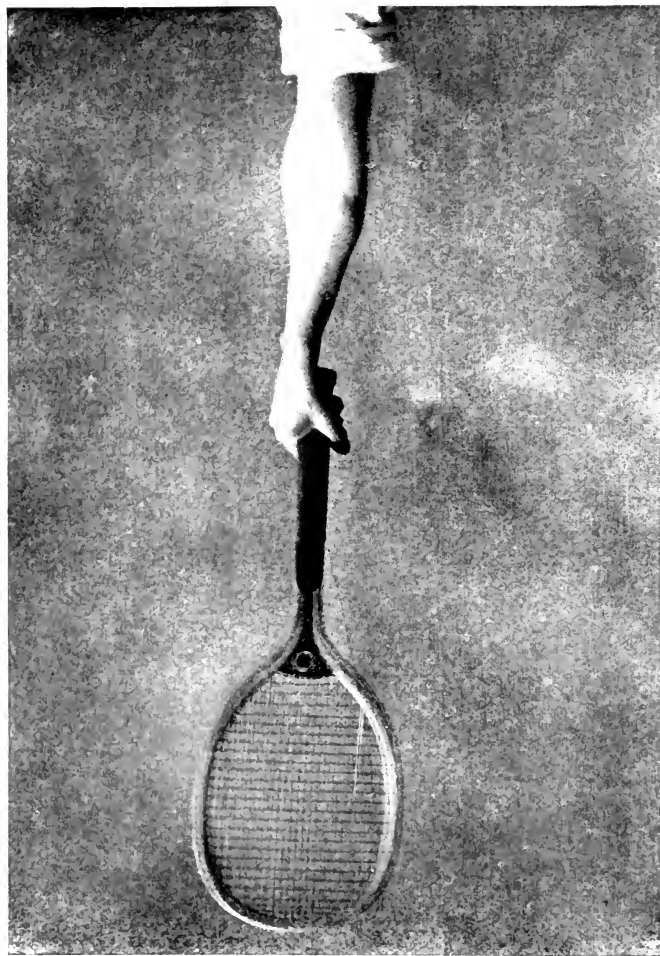


PLATE 6.—BACKHAND GRIP. REAR VIEW.

PLATE 6.—BACKHAND GRIP. REAR VIEW.

This is a rear view of the grip shown in the preceding plate.

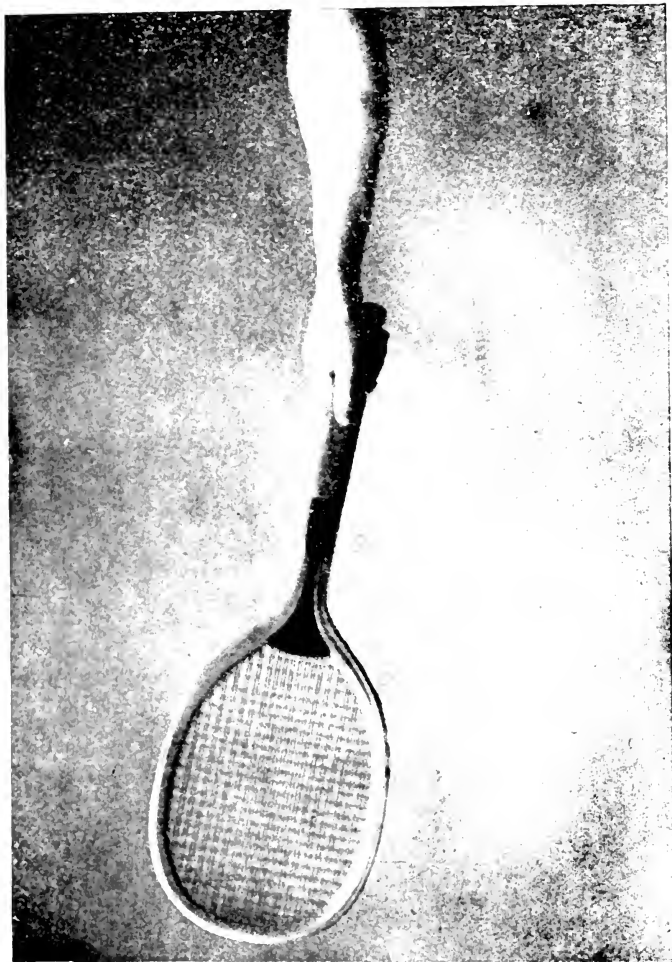


PLATE 7.—BACKHAND GRIP. THUMB UP HANDLE.

PLATE 7.—BACKHAND GRIP. THUMB UP HANDLE.

If a player has a supple wrist, and can produce his strokes well with the hold shown in plates 5 and 6, he should be satisfied unless on experiment he finds this grip better. It is preferable for some people, but not, I think, for the majority.



PLATE 8—OLD BACKHAND GRIP.

PLATE 8.—OLD BACKHAND GRIP.

This is also a fine natural grip that leaves the wrist perfectly free. Note that the button or leather is in the hand. Probably this is the finest backhand grip there is, and if the 27-inch racket had two inches taken off it, no other hold would be used on the backhand.

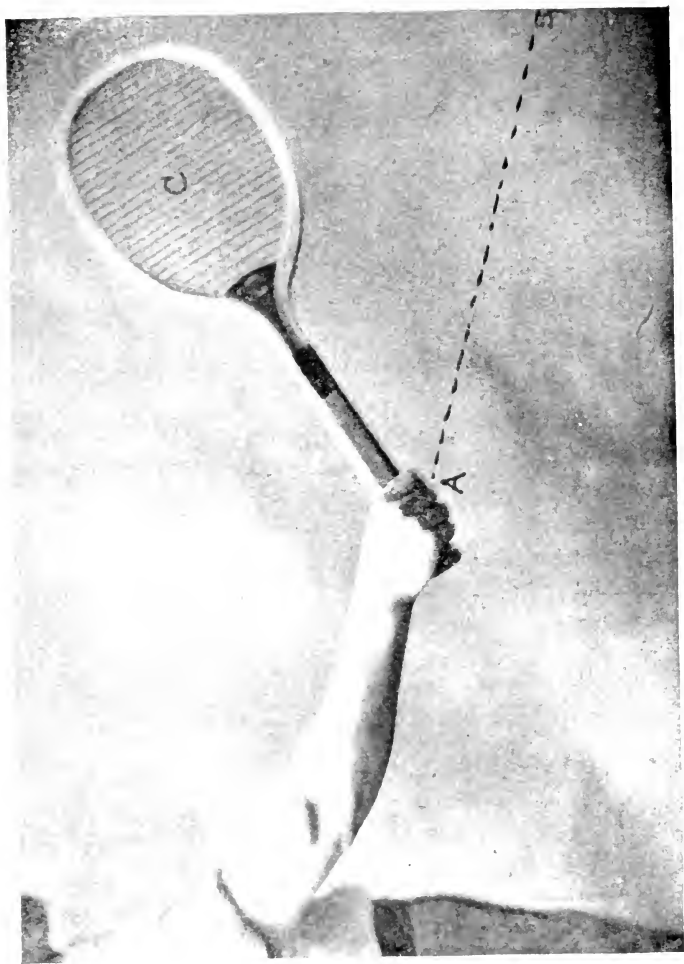


PLATE 9.—ENGLISH BACKHAND GRIP.

PLATE 9.—ENGLISH BACKHAND GRIP.

This grip shows the same defect that exists in the forehand, namely, the angle between the forearm and the handle of the racket. It will be seen, too, that the back of the arm is facing in the direction in which the ball has to be propelled. Man was never intended to use his arm thus. It will be noticed that the line of force of the forearm is in the dotted line A B, and that the major portion of the power applied to the ball at C will be derived from a rather weak wave of the wrist and the sweep of the arm in an unnatural position. From A to C is unnecessary leverage on the wrist.



PLATE 10.—ENGLISH BACKHAND, SHOWING THUMB UP HANDLE.

PLATE 10.—ENGLISH BACKHAND, SHOWING THUMB UP HANDLE.

This plate shows the position of the thumb in the English backhand stroke. It will be noticed that the thumb lies across and not straight up the handle as in the case of the natural hold. The pressure consequently comes to a considerable extent sideways on the thumb, which is the position in which it is weakest.

The racket which I have used in showing these grips is a Spalding "Gold Medal." It will be remembered that in *Great Lawn-tennis Players* I strongly condemned the double stringing down the centre of the rackets and also the excessively tight stringing of the rackets used in England.

Racket-makers say that players ask for this, and they have to give it, although they themselves think it is wrong. It is undoubtedly wrong. Although the long strings in the "spoon-face" type of racket give a little more "life" or resilience, the short cross strings of the narrow face counteract this to a very great extent. The perfect shape for a racket is a circle where central strings are of equal resilience, but that would require too much moral courage to introduce. The "Gold Medal," however, is trending in the right direction, for it will be seen that it is much wider than the average racket of to-day, so that the cross strings are not always robbing the long strings. It has another quality that I have frequently insisted upon as very desirable in rackets, one that is noticeable chiefly by its absence in other makes, and this is in the matter of stringing. It is strung so that the ball has time to dwell on the surface of the gut so that the player can get a "hold" of it. In all cut strokes this is an essential, and after the lessons of last championship tournament at Wimbledon he would indeed be a bold man who would deny the statement that three-fourths of the modern game at least consists of cut strokes.

THE GAME.

IN the game of Lawn Tennis there are two distinct classes of returns with which the player has to deal. Previous to the publication of *Modern Lawn Tennis* there had not been any definite attempt to separate them, but one might as well in billiards write indiscriminately of plain half-ball shots and cannons with the extreme of side as to include in the same category a plain overhead service and the American service.

I shall therefore divide the returns one has to consider and the strokes one has to make into two great classes, namely, Plain strokes and Cut strokes.

Plain strokes send the ball away with practically no spin on it; Cut strokes make it fly through the air spinning as it goes. Naturally the conduct of these two classes on landing is entirely different.

Although I shall separate the strokes which produce these distinct results, I shall classify and illustrate them side by side, so that the student of the game can see at a glance the difference there is in the manner of producing them.

There are certain general rules which apply to all strokes. Some of these I shall enumerate here, others in those places where they are most required.

Perhaps one of the most important points to remember is that

to get the best results from your stroke you must hit the ball with the centre of your racket if the present spoon-faced racket may be said to have a centre. The observance of this rule naturally includes that other fundamental one, "Keep your eye on the ball." This is a most important point, particularly in serving or dealing with volleys. These are, of course, elementary points, but it is astonishing how much they are disregarded even by experts, whose play naturally suffers in consequence of this neglect. The player should endeavour to keep his eye on the ball until he actually strikes it. As a matter of fact few, if any, players do this, but it is the right thing to try for, and all other things being equal, the man who lets his eye dwell on the ball longest will probably play the better and more accurate strokes.

It is important not to get too near to the ball either in the line of its flight and bound or laterally. A beginner should aim at letting the ball bound, so that it will fall at its second bound about two feet or two feet six inches to the right of his left foot. Then he can hit it just before it would, if he left it alone, bound a second time and therefore become dead. I am in all cases assuming that the player is right-handed. When he is left-handed the directions will, of course, be just the opposite to those given here.

Always grip your racket firmly at the time of making your stroke. The severer your stroke is, the firmer and stronger will be your grip; but in every case the grip at the actual moment of striking must be firm. Between strokes you will quite naturally relax your hold so as not to strain your muscles unduly, and you will then almost as naturally carry the racket in both hands, supporting it at the splice with your left hand.

A good start and a good finish are as important in lawn tennis as they are in golf ; therefore whenever it is practicable either on the forehand or the backhand swing well back before you make the stroke. Then when you have come well on to the ball, transferring your weight from the right foot to the left (in forehand strokes) as you make the stroke, follow well through and finish your stroke as though you were trying to throw the racket head away in the line the ball has gone. This, of course, is for plain ball strokes. In all cut strokes you must naturally finish more across the line of flight of the ball.

I shall deal in subsequent chapters with the science and tactics of the game after I have fully explained all the most important strokes and have shown by photograph, and where necessary by adding diagrammatic indicators to the photograph, how they are produced. I want my readers to remember that these methods are the most perfect known in the game, and the holds are the best and most suited to produce the finest strokes, for they are the results of the practice of the greatest players known in the history of the game. They are the strokes that players in New Zealand, Australia, and America learnt from England's greatest players. They have retained them and improved on them, for they know full well that the present English grip is a retrograde movement.

Not one of England's finest forehand drivers, such as A. W. Gore, S. H. Smith, or G. W. Hillyard, uses the English hold. They could not drive as they do if they did. They all have the forearm in a line with the racket handle. M. J. G. Ritchie, too, who has done many good things, always produces his strokes in a natural manner, and with the grips insisted on by me. The beginner **must remember** however, that it is quite possible that none of

these grips will be perfectly comfortable for him, and that one man's grip may be another man's undoing. If he cannot use the hold in each case indicated as the best, he must just get as near to it as he can with comfort, always bearing in mind the cardinal rule to keep the arm from the elbow downwards in a line with the racket handle.

STROKES.

THE SERVICE.

It is practically impossible to be a first-class player unless one has a good service. The service is the groundwork of your attack, and it must be the object of every aspiring player to cultivate a strong and varied delivery. If he learns to hold his racket naturally, and to discard as puerile and pernicious the idea that lawn tennis can be played to the greatest advantage with one grip, there is no reason why he should not do this.

Two good general rules for the beginner are :—

1. Don't try to hit your ball down into the service court. It will come down, if you hit it properly, of its own accord. You must get the idea of hitting it downwards out of your mind.

2. Make your faults over the service line. Don't put them into the net. Go a yard above the net sooner than into it.

This latter injunction is very important. A service is really a smash from the most difficult position. You must try to keep away from the net. You will soon correct your length.

In delivering the service your weight will be on your right foot, as shown in the next two plates. The ball is thrown well up over the right ear and struck the moment it comes within reach of the centre of your racket. As you hit it you shift your weight on to the left foot and follow well through your stroke nearly to the ground.



PLATE XL.—FOREHAND SERVICE.

PLATE II.—FOREHAND SERVICE.

Notice here the ball just leaving the hand. It has run up the first and second fingers, which guide it in its flight. The racket is in the act of falling behind the head to gather momentum. The greater weight is on the rear foot, and the balance is distributed between the balls of the big toes of each foot. This is important. It may be called the starting-point. It is where you grip the earth. Notice the position of the feet, one facing down the court, the other at right angles. This is the best position for balance of body weight, which is essential in lawn tennis.

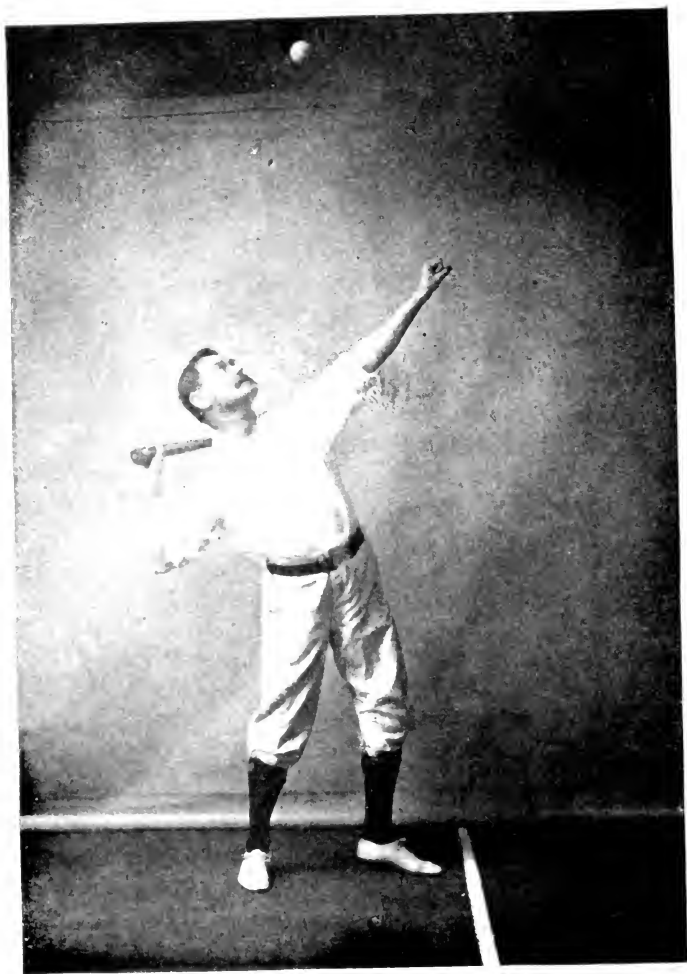


PLATE 12.—FOREHAND SERVICE.

PLATE 12.—FOREHAND SERVICE.

Notice here particularly the position of the feet, the distribution of the weight, the drooped right shoulder with body and head right back, the racket behind the head, and the balance of the extended left arm with lightly clenched hand. The hand should never be loose ; the arm should never be loose. Whatever the right arm is doing, the left should be counterbalancing.



PLATE 13.—FOREHAND SERVICE. IMPACT.

Here it will be seen the weight has been transferred straight on to and *down* the left foot in a line towards the net. The ball has been struck fairly, and will go away approximately in the line A B.



PLATE 14 FINISH OF FOREHAND SERVICE

PLATE 14.—FINISH OF FOREHAND SERVICE.

The force of the blow in delivering the service is here shown to be carrying the player into his stride for the net. In this service the head of the racket follows through, as though thrown after the ball.



PLATE 15. FOREHAND CUE SERVICE

PLATE 15.—FOREHAND CUT SERVICE.

This is a most useful service. When serving from the right court it skims over the net and pitches near the opposite side line, keeps very low, and breaks away out of court. Well placed, it drives a player so far out of court as to leave almost a certain passing shot on his backhand before he can regain his position. The racket cuts across the ball as shown by the line on it.



PLATE 16. FOREHAND CUT SERVE. IMPACT

PLATE 16.—FOREHAND CUT SERVICE. IMPACT.

The racket is cutting across the ball as shown by the line on it. Note position of feet, balance of left arm, and that the racket and arm are in the same straight line as regards the force to be exerted, namely, in the direction of the mark on the ball.

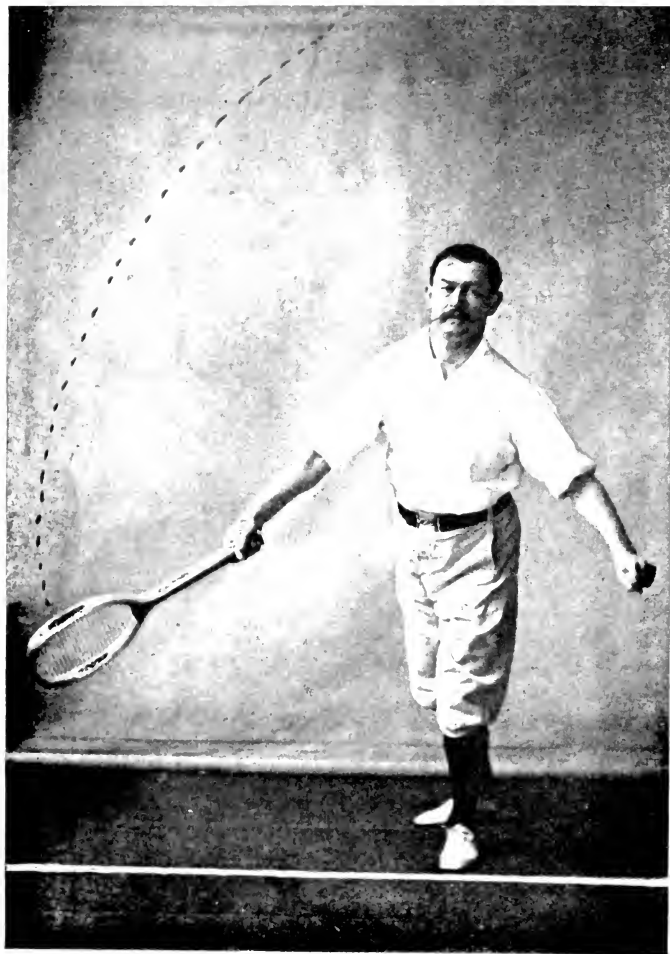


PLATE 17.—FINISH OF FOREHAND CUT SERVICE.

PLATE 17.—FINISH OF FOREHAND CUT SERVICE.

The racket has travelled down the dotted line and finished away out to one side of the player, not as in the plain service right in the line of flight of the ball. Notice the relative position of arm and racket.



PLATE 18.—CHOP SERVICE

PLATE 18.—CHOP SERVICE.

This is a most useful change service. The racket travels along the dotted line until it reaches the ball as shown in the next plate.



PLATE 10—THE CHOP SERVICE. IMPACT

PLATE 19.—THE CHOP SERVICE. IMPACT.

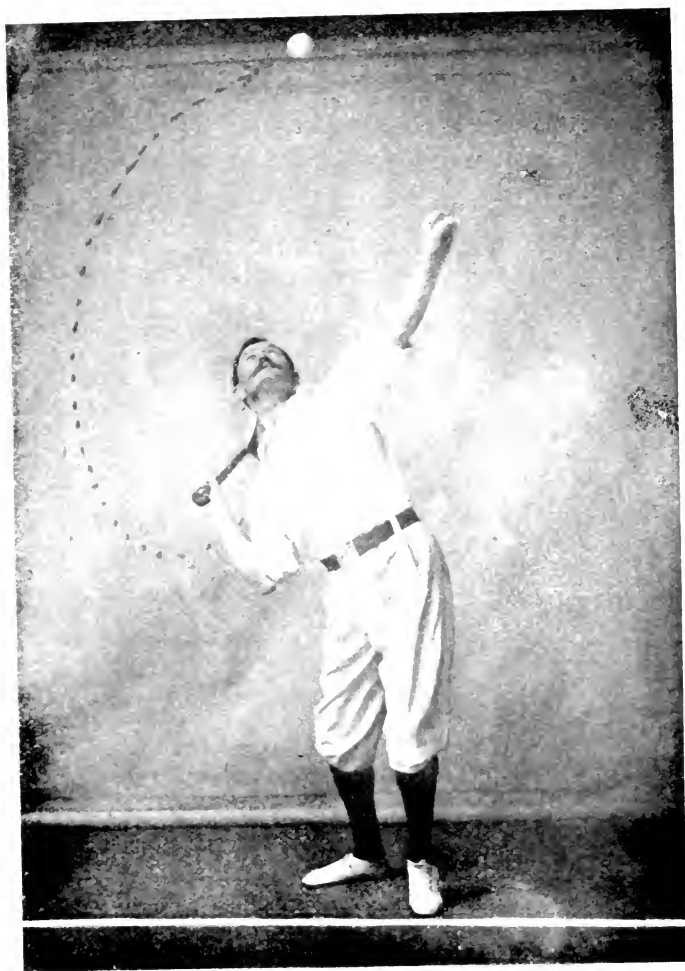
The racket is here shown cutting down behind the ball. This causes it to fly with a large amount of back spin. It is a nasty service to play, as it shoots low and sometimes breaks a good deal ; also the back spin on it makes it very tricky to return, as unless it is allowed for and the return played higher than off a plain ball, it is likely to find the net.



PLATE 20.—THE CHOP SERVICE. FINISH.

PLATE 20.—THE CHOP SERVICE. FINISH.

The finish in this service is much the same as that in the forehand cut service, but it is generally straighter down towards the ground. Note the position of the feet.



PICTURE 21. REVERSE OVERHEAD CUT SERVICE - START.

PLATE 21.—REVERSE OVERHEAD CUT SERVICE. START.

This is one of the finest services in the game. The racket head droops behind the head and comes round as shown by the dotted line until it hits the ball as shown in the next plate. Notice the weight here is thrown to the right side, as it is to be used towards the left. This is a particularly nasty service, as it breaks away to one's backhand, and, moreover, it is comparatively rare. In England it is practically unknown.

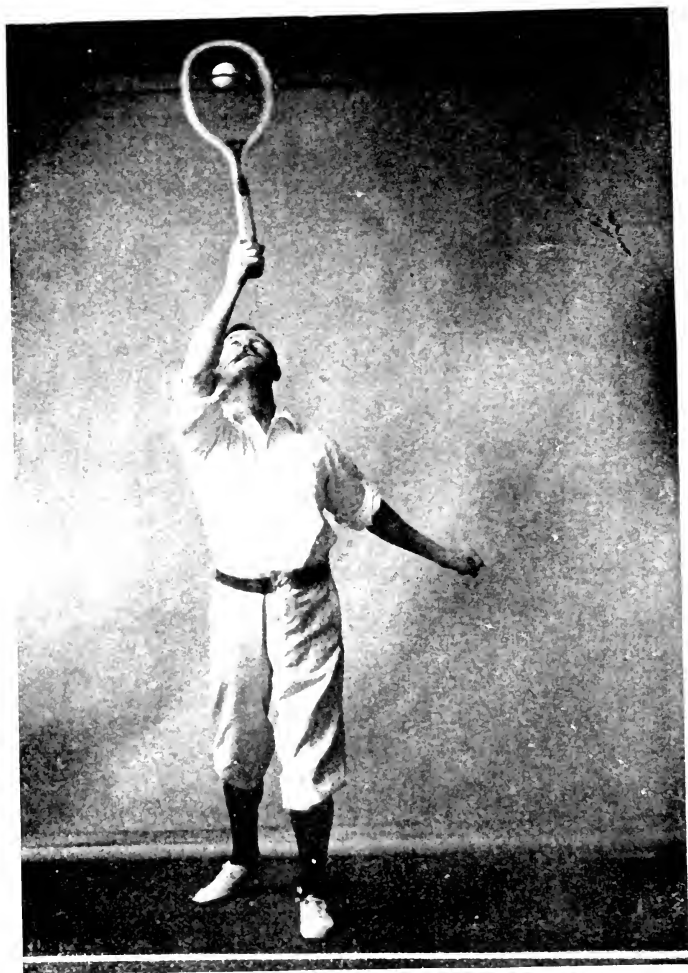


PLATE 22. REVERSE OVERHEAD SERVE. IMPACT.

PLATE 22.—REVERSE OVERHEAD SERVICE. IMPACT.

Here the racket is passing across the ball in the line shown on it, and thus imparting to it a spinning motion from left to right. The ball is not quite in contact. It has to drop an inch or two to the centre of the racket. Notice the position of body and feet. For this service one nearly faces the net.



PLATE 23. -READY FOR OVERHEAD CUT STROKE - SHOULDER GRIP.

PLATE 23.—REVERSE OVERHEAD CUT SERVICE SHORT GRIP.

It is a curious fact not generally known that by shortening the racket as shown in photograph one can get a very great amount of spin on a ball. Mr. N. E. Brookes, the Australian player, occasionally serves a very fine service with the shortened grip.



PLATE 24. FINISH OF REVERSE OVERHEAD CUT SERVICE.

PLATE 24.—FINISH OF REVERSE OVERHEAD CUT SERVICE.

The racket head has passed down the dotted line, and the stroke is finished well across the body as shown. If too much effort is put into the cut across, it makes the server slow in following up his service.



PLATE 25 THE AMERICAN SERVE

PLATE 25.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE.

This is a delivery of the utmost importance, yet so far no first-class English player has acquired it. Their hold practically prevents them from doing so. Dr. Eaves, the Australian player, uses this stroke very well, and Mr. Anthony Wilding, the New Zealand player, is developing a fine service, as he plays both this and the reverse American quite well occasionally.

It is produced by "top," "lift," "upper cut," call it what you will; and the more you can cut over the top of the ball and the harder you can hit it, the more eccentric and effective will be your deliveries. The line across the ball shows how your racket should cut upwards and sideways across the ball. This is a rear view of the player.



PLATE 26. THE AMERICAN SERVICE

PLATE 26.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE.

This is a front view of the service. In delivering it many Americans throw the ball up so that it is about the spot shown by the dotted ball. They then bend themselves back until they are nearly the shape of the letter U, and hit the ball with a lot of upward cut. To keep this up, however, one requires to be in perfect condition and practice, for it is very hard on the abdominal muscles.



PLATE 27. —THE AMERICAN SERVICE.

PLATE 27.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE.

This shows almost the moment of impact. The ball should, if anything, be a foot or nine inches nearer to the left, but a very effective service may be obtained from this position. The dotted line shows the travel of the head of the racket. The angle at which it crosses the ball is all-important, as on this depends whether you get American, that is "top," or ordinary cut.

PLATE 28.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE. IMPACT.

This photograph is taken down the line, and shows the position of the racket at the moment of impact. After one has acquired a fair degree of accuracy at this angle, an attempt should be made to turn the top side of the racket more forward so as to come over the ball more. The dotted line shows how the racket cuts up behind the ball. The line in front of the ball shows approximately its line of flight.

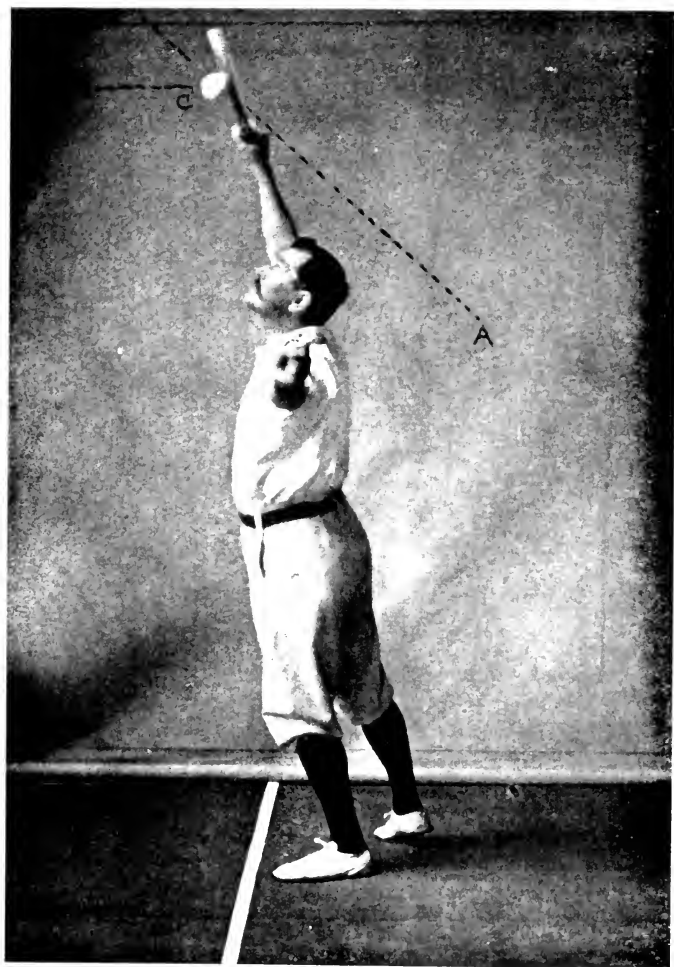


PLATE 98A. THE AMERICAN SERVICE IMPACT

PLATE 28A.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE. IMPACT.

To the untrained eye this plate will appear to be exactly the same as the preceding one, yet it has a most important lesson of its own to teach. This is in the difference of the angle in the face of the racket. Here it will be seen that the upper side of the racket is turned over forwards more than in the preceding plate. This is a matter of the greatest importance in this service. The more you can get on top of the ball and yet clear the net, the harder and faster will you be able to serve, and the longer and more eccentric will be your bound. A B shows the line of travel of the racket head and C D the flight of the ball.



PLATE 291 THE AMERICAN SERVICE FINISH.

PLATE 29.—THE AMERICAN SERVICE. FINISH.

It is a peculiarity of the American service that the finish is as shown in the photograph. One would almost expect the weight to be thrown across and on to the right leg, yet it never is ; in fact, generally the right foot is quite clear of the ground. The explanation is that all one's body weight is exerted upwardly, and this is why if the extreme of spin is desired it is so important to throw the ball well over to the left and to bend well backwards to it so as to get the snap of the body upwards.



PLATE 30. RIVIERE AMERICAN SERVICE.

PLATE 30.—REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE.

The dotted line shows how the head of the racket falls like an Indian club making a turn behind one's back, and then cuts up and across the ball as shown by the line on it and the continuation of the dotted line. Note how the weight is thrown on to the right leg and the body bent over to the right to get the upward hit.



PLATE 31. REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE

PLATE 31.—REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE.

Looking down the line it will be seen that the face of the racket is laid back at the moment of impact. It is easier to learn the stroke thus, and one can get a large amount of cut in this manner. Both the American service and the reverse American service break back against the way they are swerving. It is this peculiarity that makes them so tricky. The blow in this case is being struck across away from us upwardly and towards the left to A and the ball flies away to B.



PLATE 32. REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE.

PLATE 32.—REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE.

This is a moment before impact. The dotted line shows how the racket passes upwards and across from right to left, imparting top or forward spin to the ball. In this service one faces the net. Notice the distribution of weight, position of feet, and balance of left arm.



PLATE 33. REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE. FINISH.

PLATE 33.—REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE. FINISH.

The finish in this service is very similar to that of the reverse overhead cut service; indeed, frequently one who serves the reverse overhead cut well gets an American without intending it. This was particularly noticeable in M. Paul de Borman's fine reverse overhead service. The dotted line shows the travel of the head of the racket. Notice position of feet and balance.



PLATE 34.—WAITING FOR SERVICE.

PLATE 34.—WAITING FOR SERVICE.

This is a most important position. One must not stand with stiff legs and in a state of inaction. The weight should be thrown forward on to the ball of the toe, and the knees slightly flexed, for you cannot start from a straight joint without first flexing it. The racket should be held as shown in the plate, and the player should be nearly overbalanced so as to be ready to start like a flash in any given direction. Stand as nearly as possible diagonally opposite to the server unless you know of any peculiarity in his service which makes it advisable to take up another position.

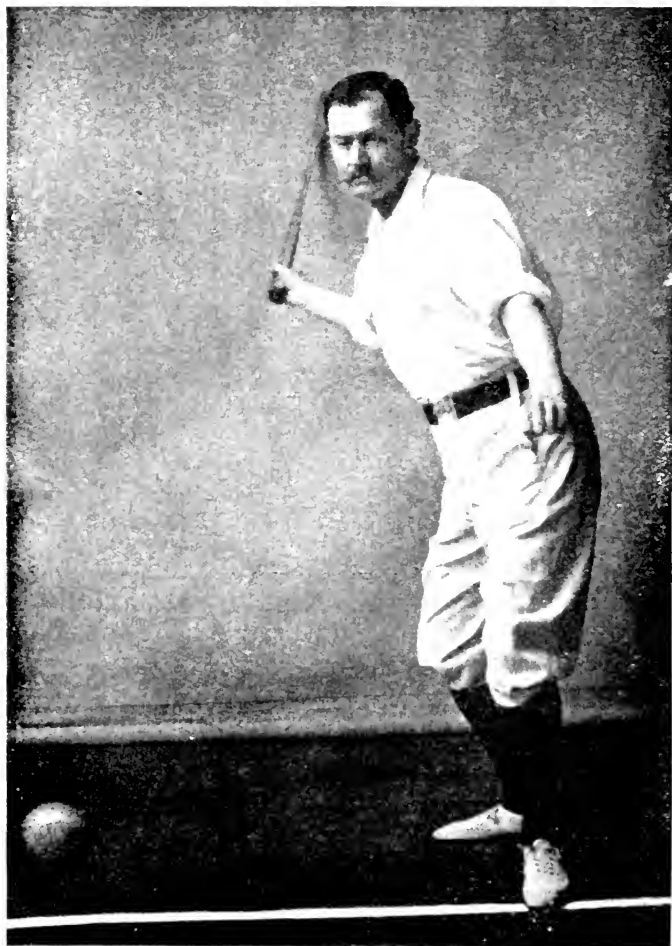


PLATE 35. FOREHAND STROKE—SWING BACK.

THE FOREHAND STROKE.

This stroke is the foundation of nearly every player's game, and too much trouble in mastering it cannot be taken by any one who wishes to become first class.

For the forehand stroke you must stand with your left side to the net and, roughly speaking, in a line towards the place you intend to hit the ball to. Your left foot will be in front and your right foot will be about eighteen inches behind it. Just as you are striking the ball you transfer your weight from your right leg to your left. If this transference is done well you will find it adds much to the effectiveness of your stroke. As you become more accurate you will probably step in to your ball as you play it by taking a short step with the left foot. You must always have your weight fairly evenly distributed until you are going to play a stroke. Then, in the case of a forehand drive, it is thrown back on to the right foot until almost the moment of making the stroke.

You must, in the first instance, aim at acquiring certainty in returning plain balls. When you have got that you may take up the more difficult cut strokes and indulge in a few attempts at driving with plenty of pace ; but always remember that accuracy in playing the plain ball strokes with good length and position is the foundation of the game.

PLATE 35 —FOREHAND STROKE. SWING BACK.

Here the ball is shown approaching the player. The racket is swung back to about the level of the shoulder, the weight is on the right leg, and the left arm is extended to balance. Notice carefully the position of the feet.



PLATE 30.—FOREHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

PLATE 36.—FOREHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

The weight is just being transferred to the left foot. Notice position of feet and balance. This is a perfectly plain stroke; that is, the ball comes off the racket as if it were bounding off the wall of a house, practically without spin. Notice the position of the ball both laterally and longitudinally with relation to the body of the player. With this stroke it could be played with comfort nine inches or a foot nearer to the left leg. This would be impossible with the English grip.



PLATE 37.—FOREHAND STROKE. FINISH.

PLATE 37.—FOREHAND STROKE. 'FINISH.

The racket has struck the ball and followed after it in the line of its flight as though the head of the racket were being thrown after the ball. This is a true follow through. The stroke is a most useful one, and is much superior to the ordinary English forehand, which cramps the player's stroke too much unless he gets it exactly at the right distance from him. I have seen a man play a first-class game with no other forehand stroke but this. There are, however, more valuable shots on the forehand, as I shall show in due course. Note the position of feet and the balance.



PLATE 38. FORWARD DRIVE WITH LEFT.

PLATE 38.—FOREHAND DRIVE WITH LIFT.

Observe the swing back, the racket in line with the arm, and the weight on the right foot, also position of left arm, which has come back naturally with the right.

The curved dotted line A B shows how the head of the racket will travel, and the line C D in front of the ball indicates approximately the flight thereof.

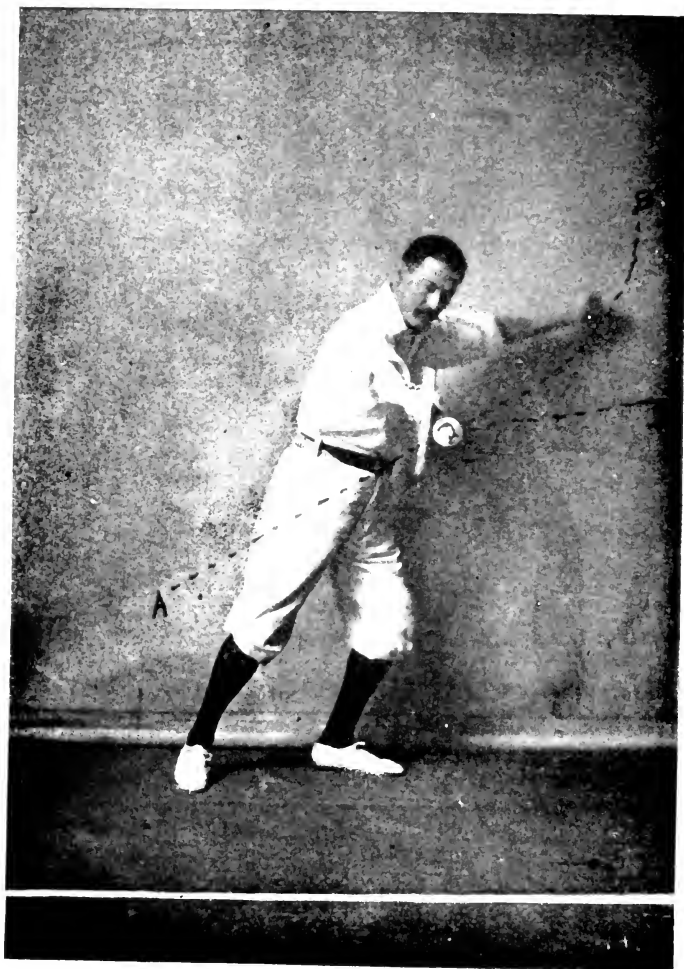


PLATE 30 FOREHAND DRIVE WITH LEFT IMPACT

PLATE 39.—FOREHAND DRIVE WITH LIFT. IMPACT.

The weight here is transferred to the left foot and the racket is coming rapidly forward and upward in the line A B, producing the flight C D, and causing the ball to spin forward as shown by the arrow on it. This spin is called lift top or overspin, and it causes the ball to dip suddenly at the end of its flight, so that many balls which appear to be going out of court dive suddenly into it in a very deceptive manne



PLATE 40. FINISH OF FOREHAND DRIVE WITH LIFT.

PLATE 40.—FINISH OF FOREHAND DRIVE WITH LIFT.

Notice the transference of weight on to the ball of the toe of the left foot, and the finish across the body instead of straight down the court as in the plain stroke.

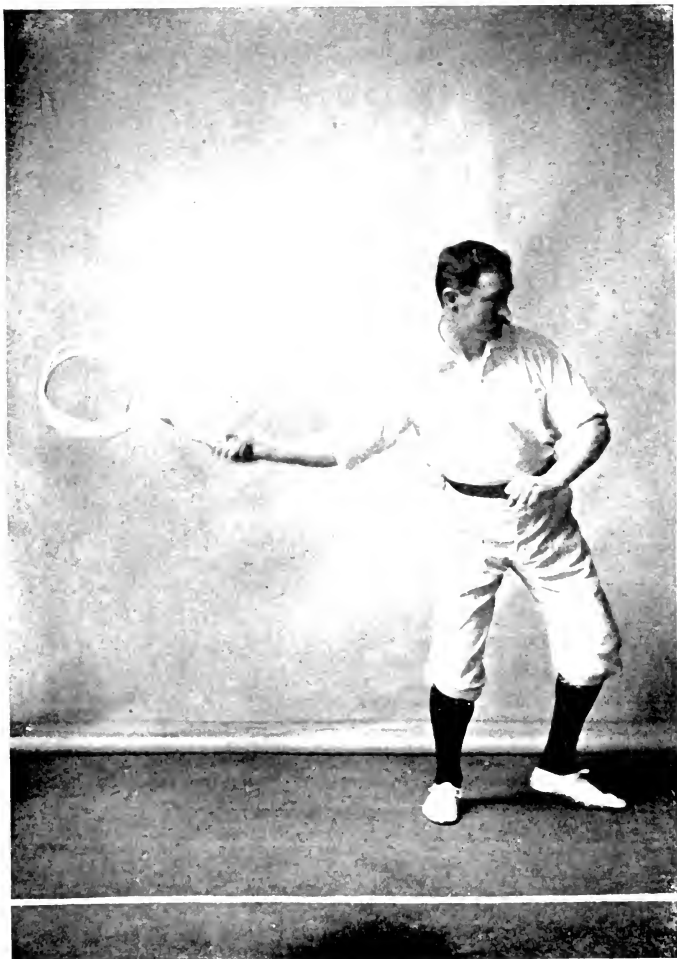


PLATE 41 HORIZONTAL FOREHAND DRIVE.

PLATE 41.—HORIZONTAL FOREHAND DRIVE.

This stroke may be played with or without lift. The swing back is practically the same as for the forehand drive with lift, but in playing this stroke the head of the racket does not drop so low as is therein shown.



PLATE 42. HORIZONTAL DRIVE IMPACT.

PLATE 42,—HORIZONTAL DRIVE. IMPACT.

The dotted line A B shows the travel of the racket head. When the ball is very high the top side of the racket may be inclined a little forward. If the stroke is then played as shown by A B, the angle of the face imparts top to the ball. This return may also be played as a lifting drive if desired. In that case the racket must cut up more sharply, so that A B would then be at an angle of about 45 degrees to the court.

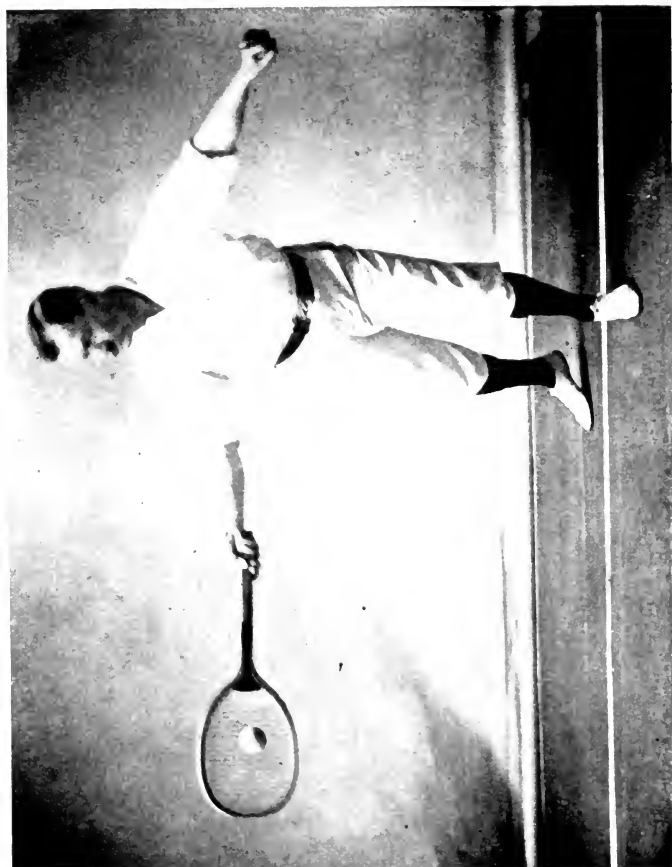


PLATE 43.—HORIZONTAL DRIVE. IMPACT.

PLATE 43.—HORIZONTAL DRIVE.' IMPACT.

This plate is a front view of plate 42. It gives a clear idea of the distance from the body at which the ball is taken ; there the ball is just going on to the racket. It is taken nearly at the full extent of the arm and racket, and with the forearm and racket handle in line. The racket is swept right across the body nearly at the same height as that at which it hits the ball, and the stroke finishes far over to the left and about level with the shoulder. If played with lift it finishes higher.



PLATE 44 FOREHAND DRIVE.

PLATE 44.—FOREHAND DRIVE.

This is one of the most remarkable strokes in the game. It is carrying out beyond what I say the practice of having arm and racket handle in line. This is the hold Miss Sutton, the American lady player, uses. It is hardly possible to get any more powerful stroke on the forehand, as this peculiar hold enables one to get a direct hit upwards along the dotted line. This gives an immense amount of lift, and causes the ball to keep in court in a wonderful manner. As I have already indicated, any further development of the forehand drive will come from this stroke. I have not seen more than two or three players use this stroke.

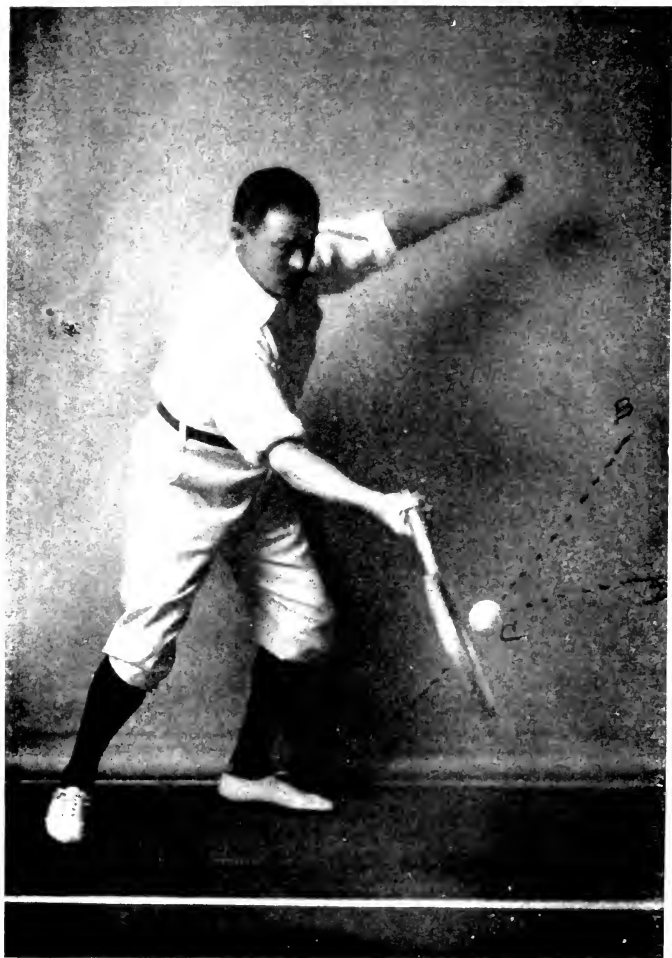


PLATE 45 FORWARD DRIVE.

PLATE 45.—FOREHAND DRIVE.

This is the same stroke as shown in the preceding plate, but it is being played on a low ball. The racket will travel up the line A B, and the ball flies away down the line C D. The racket is turned over at the moment of impact with a snap of the wrist. This turn or wrist flick does not roll the ball over as many think. It simply causes the racket to brush across the ball more quickly, and so imparts to it excessive lift. For quick-dropping passing shots on either hand this shot is very valuable.



PLATE 40. FOREHAND DRIVE. FINISH.

PLATE 46.—FOREHAND DRIVE. FINISH.

This is the natural finish of the forehand drive explained in the two preceding plates. The body lifts as the stroke is played. This also is the natural finish for the forehand horizontal drive if the racket be kept about a foot lower.

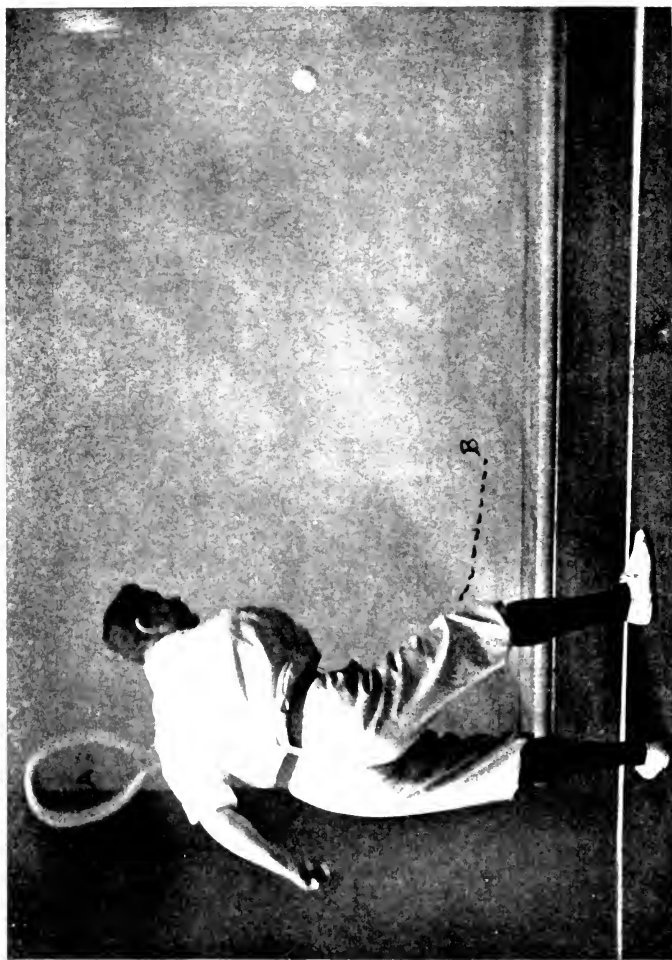


PLATE 47.—BACKHAND STROKE.

THE BACKHAND STROKE.

Very many players who ought to know better continually make this stroke in the wrong position. The right foot should be in front; in fact, the instructions for the forehand stroke are practically reversed. The ball is met further from the player's body than is the case in the forehand drive. The reason for this will be apparent from a study of the photographs in this section. No words can possibly explain the correct manner of producing this stroke so well as the photographs, so I shall deal with the peculiar points of the different shots as they appear in the pictures.

PLATE 47.—BACKHAND STROKE.

Note position of feet. This is most important in this stroke. Observe the weight on left leg and the full swing back of the racket, which travels in the dotted line A B to meet the ball near B.



PLATE 48 BACKHAND STROKE.

PLATE 48.—BACKHAND STROKE.

This is a front view of the stroke in the preceding plate, and serves to show clearly the position of the ball laterally with relation to the striker. The ball being so much nearer the camera than the player, is slightly out of focus.

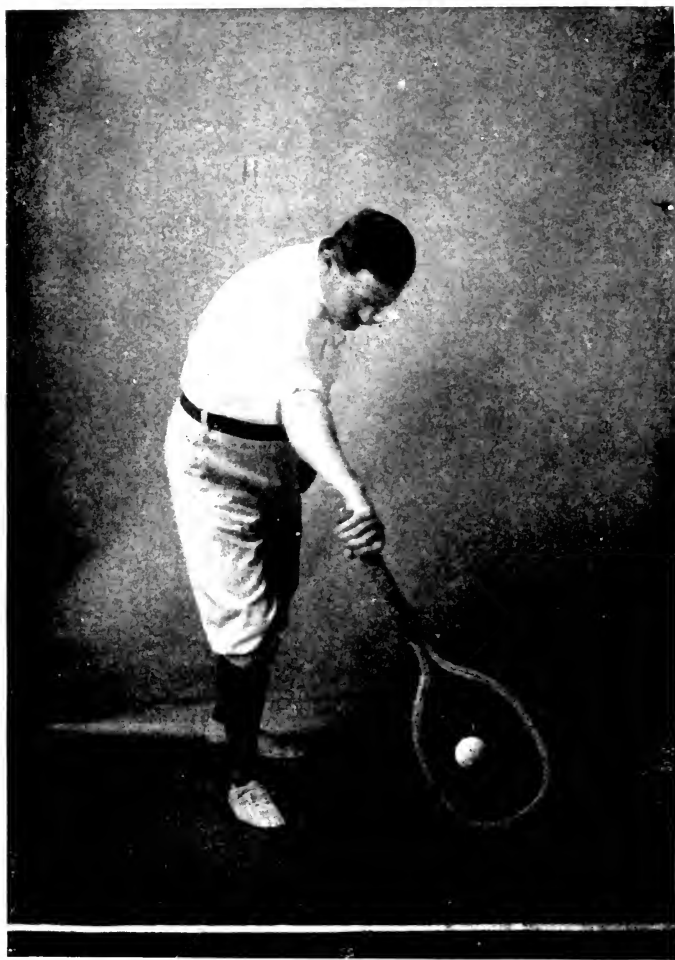


PLATE 49.--BACKHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

PLATE 49.—BACKHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

This is a front view of the plain face backhand stroke shown in the two preceding plates. Note position of feet, hold of racket, and position of arm in relation to racket handle.

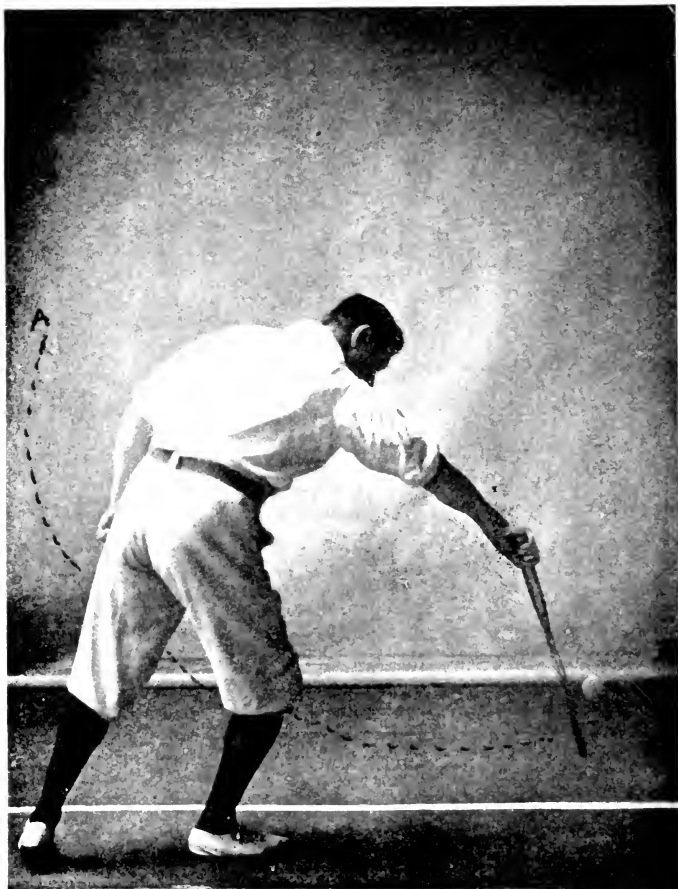


PLATE 50. BACKHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

PLATE 50.—BACKHAND STROKE. IMPACT.

This is a side view of the preceding plate showing relative position of ball and player longitudinally. This stroke is being played naturally without any lift, and the racket head travels as shown by dotted line A B.

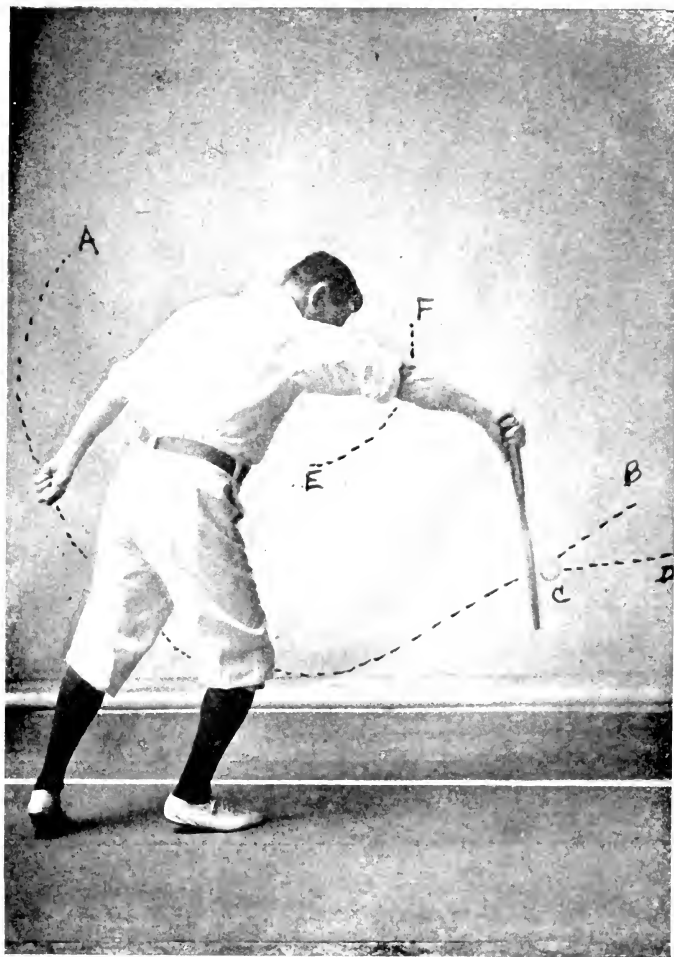


PLATE 51. BACKHAND DRIVE

PLATE 51.—BACKHAND DRIVE.

This is easily the most important stroke on the backhand. Played in all other respects like the plain backhand, the racket is drawn sharply up across the ball as shown by the line A B. At the same time the elbow is curving up in the line E F and the body is straightening. The result of all these motions is that this stroke can be made to take a large amount of lift. It is a most useful and telling shot, and not, like the English backhand stroke, merely a defensive shot. The cut up across the ball is generally, if anything, a little more sudden than I have shown it in the diagram-photograph.



PLATE 52.—BACKHAND DRIVE.

PLATE 52.—BACKHAND DRIVE.

The follow through from the last stroke shown brings one into this constrained position, so that a free and natural finish is impossible unless one turns the thumb round so that it goes up on top of the racket as shown in the next plate.



PLATE 53.—BACKHAND DRIVE. FINISH

PLATE 53.—BACKHAND DRIVE. FINISH.

Here it will be seen that the thumb has come round on top of the racket, and thus a free and natural finish has been obtained. The hold of the racket is not relaxed in any way. The wrist simply turns and the finish becomes easy and natural.



PLATE 54.—HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE.

PLATE 54.—HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE.

The racket is swung round in the dotted line and meets the ball squarely as shown in the next plate. Note the position of the feet.



PLATE 55 —HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE. IMPACT.

PLATE 55.—HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE. IMPACT.

The racket here has come round at the same distance from the ground all the way. Note racket and arm in same straight line as regards force to be produced, although not so otherwise. See position of feet and balance of body.



PLATE 56.—HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE. FINISH.

PLATE 56.—HORIZONTAL BACKHAND DRIVE FINISH.

This is the finish of the stroke in the preceding plate. It is a free and natural shot, and great pace can be obtained with it.



PLATE 57.—ENGLISH BACKHAND STROKE.

PLATE 57.—ENGLISH BACKHAND STROKE.

Note the angle between arm and racket, and that the racket is coming in underneath the ball to undercut it. This action produces back spin, which is not advisable for a staple stroke.



PLATE 58 —ENGLISH BACKHAND STROKE. FINISH.

PLATE 58.—ENGLISH BACKHAND STROKE. FINISH.

The finish here is got from a semicircular mowing action which has a marked tendency to throw the player into a cross-legged position. This is not by any means an exaggerated position. If any one thinks it is, a glance at plates 112 and 113, *Great Lawn-tennis Players*, will soon undeceive him. It is a weak, defensive shot, instead of as it should be, a strong, natural winner.



PLATE 50 FOREHAND LOB.

THE LOB.**PLATE 59.—FOREHAND LOB.**

The lob is a most important stroke, and to play it consistently well requires great skill and delicacy of touch. As the staple of one's game it is contemptible. In its proper place it is an admirable and indispensable stroke. The best and most accurate way to lob is to let the ball fall as shown in the plate and then to come in under it and toss it up with a straight stroke as shown. This gives a perfect direction and also more command of length than the round-arm lob so commonly played in England. It is a defensive shot, and when in serious trouble, unless you can be sure of outlobbing your opponent, you should lob high. It gives you more time to get into position, and is, moreover, harder for him to smash, as it comes down fast and requires accurate timing.



PLATE 60. —BACKHAND LOB.

PLATE 60.—BACKHAND LOB.

This stroke may be played with the plain face or with cut from A to B. Both strokes are good. Personally, I like the cut lob, as one can get a very accurate shot with it, but if the wind is blowing from the right-hand side of your court you must lob well towards the middle of the court, as otherwise the twist on your ball will make it swerve out over the side line. A good backhand drive can be played with this stroke, and the forehand drive with the reverse cut from B to A is a good stroke for those who cannot play the forehand lifting drive. Notice the position of feet and that here I am using the old backhand grip with the leather inside my hand ; also observe arm in line with racket.



PLATE OL.—THE CHOP. SWING BACK.

THE CHOP.**PLATE 61.—THE CHOP. SWING BACK.**

The chop is a most useful stroke. There are few, if any, more effective returns off a high-bounding ball such as shown in the plate. The ball flies low, skims the net, and on striking the ground shoots low and fast on account of the backward rotation or spin. A good length chop on your opponent's backhand is always good to go up on. It is a very tricky stroke to play, and the man at the net generally gets a chance to deal with the return.



PLATE 62.—THE CHOP. IMPACT.

PLATE 62.—THE CHOP. IMPACT.

This view shows very clearly how the chop is played from the position in the preceding plate. The racket travels down the line A B, cutting across the ball at C, and producing the flight C D. As the racket cuts across the intended line of flight C D, it causes the ball to revolve rapidly backwards as shown by the arrow under the ball. This is called back spin or backward vertical rotation, and is the natural result of every pure chop stroke. The chop should not be used as a staple ground stroke, although many fine players do so. The forehand lifting drive is a superior stroke.



PLATE 63 — BACKHAND CHOP.

PLATE 63.—BACKHAND CHOP.

This is a stroke never seen in England. The racket comes from above the left ear at A, and is chopped smartly down the line A B. The action viewed from the side at the moment of contact is, so far as regards the face of the racket and the ball, in all respects similar to that shown in plate 62. It is a very useful shot, particularly for dropping short returns off high balls. This, of course, could be done by backhand cut, but in that case one has to wait for the ball to drop a little lower, and the stroke is not rendered any more certain when it has to be lifted ; also time is wasted, and this is important.



PLATE 64.—FOREHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

THE HALF-VOLLEY.**PLATE 64.—FOREHAND HALF-VOLLEY.**

The great secret of the half-volley is smothering the bound. This is especially so in fast balls. Most players hold the face of the racket too vertically when making this stroke, consequently the ball flies too high. The art in playing this beautiful stroke consists in timing it accurately on to the racket at A, and then covering its natural tendency to bound upwards with a forwardly inclined racket face, so that it is forced to compromise and come out from under the racket at the angle shown by the line A B. It is essential to watch the ball almost on to your racket—in fact, on to it if you can—for this stroke.

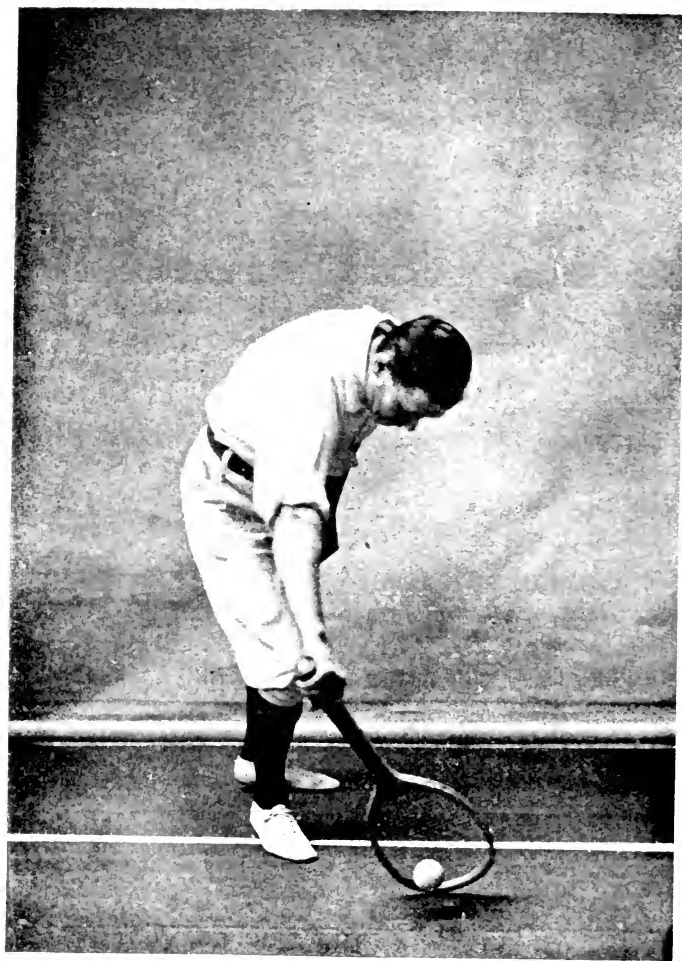


PLATE 65. -- BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

PLATE 65.—BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

The same principle must be observed on the backhand as in the forehand half-volley, and where practicable the "covering" of the ball should be done as much as possible in a line with the spot where one intends to place the ball. The half-volley is a beautiful and useful stroke, but against a player who uses much rotation it is a very risky one to try, for it is so hard, against a man who chops, for instance, to time the ball on to the centre of the racket.



PLATE 66. —BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

PLATE 66.—BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

This plate shows a half-volley played wide from the body. Here again it will be seen that the racket is covering the bound of the ball. Notice the position of the feet and the grip of the racket. The old method of gripping the racket with the leather or button in the handle will quite likely come into favour again. No hold gives such freedom for wrist action, and without wrist work lawn tennis is a very unattractive game.



PLATE 67. SNAPPING BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

PLATE 67.—SNAPPING BACKHAND HALF-VOLLEY.

Here the ball has nearly passed the player, but by a quick half-turn he has succeeded in covering it. Note that the right foot is still towards the net and the back nearly turned to the net. Had the ball been a yard further away, it would have been necessary to swing the right leg out beyond the left, and to play the ball actually with the back towards the net. Some players are wonderfully expert in thus snapping backhand half-volleys that look almost impossible.



PLATE 68.—THE OVERHEAD VOLLEY. WAITING FOR A SMASH.

THE VOLLEY.**PLATE 68.—THE OVERHEAD VOLLEY. WAITING FOR A SMASH.**

This is a stroke of the utmost importance. To be a first-class player one must be good overhead, although certain notable exceptions have proved the rule. This position will be seen to be similar to that shown for the overhead service. Every service is practically an overhead volley, which when played hard is often called a smash. Note position of feet, distribution of weight, drooped shoulder, body and head well back, and balance of left arm. The left arm is as useful to an expert tennis-player for balance as it is to the weight-lifter. The side of the racket furthest from the net is the side that will hit the ball. The reverse overhead cut service and the forehand cut service, particularly the latter, make very fine overhead volleys or smashes.

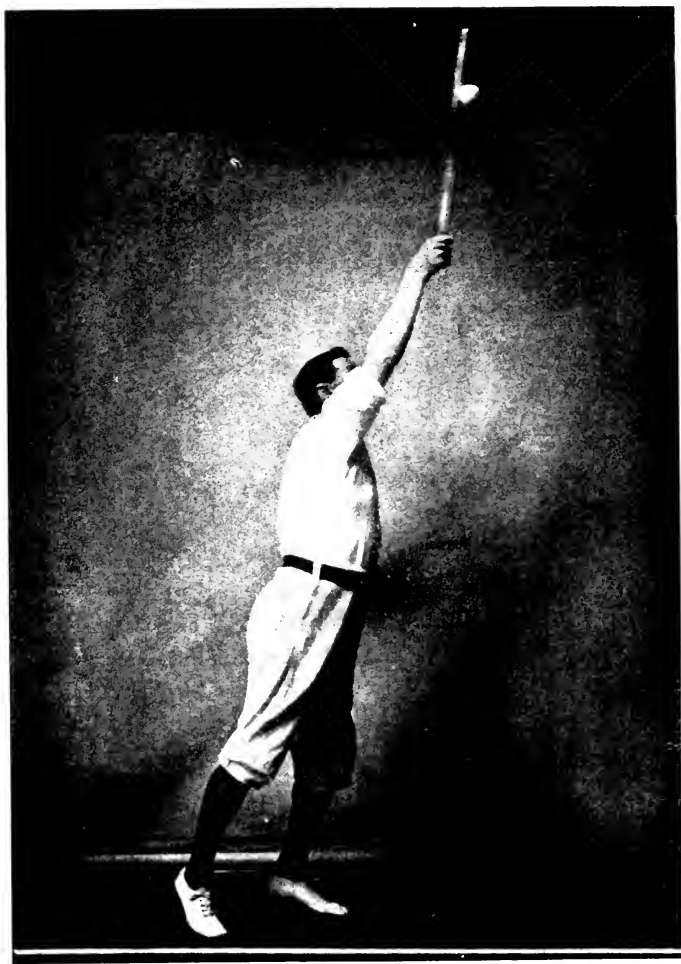


PLATE 66.—OVERHEAD VOLLEY OR SMASH. IMPACT.

PLATE 69.—OVERHEAD VOLLEY OR SMASH. IMPACT.

Here it will be seen that the weight has been transferred to the left foot, and in the act of passing into his stride the player has struck the blow with all his weight. This matter of weight transference is of the utmost importance. You could not throw a cricket-ball far unless you put your weight on to your right leg and then hurled it forward on to your left. Neither can you smash a ball at lawn tennis very well unless you do the same thing.

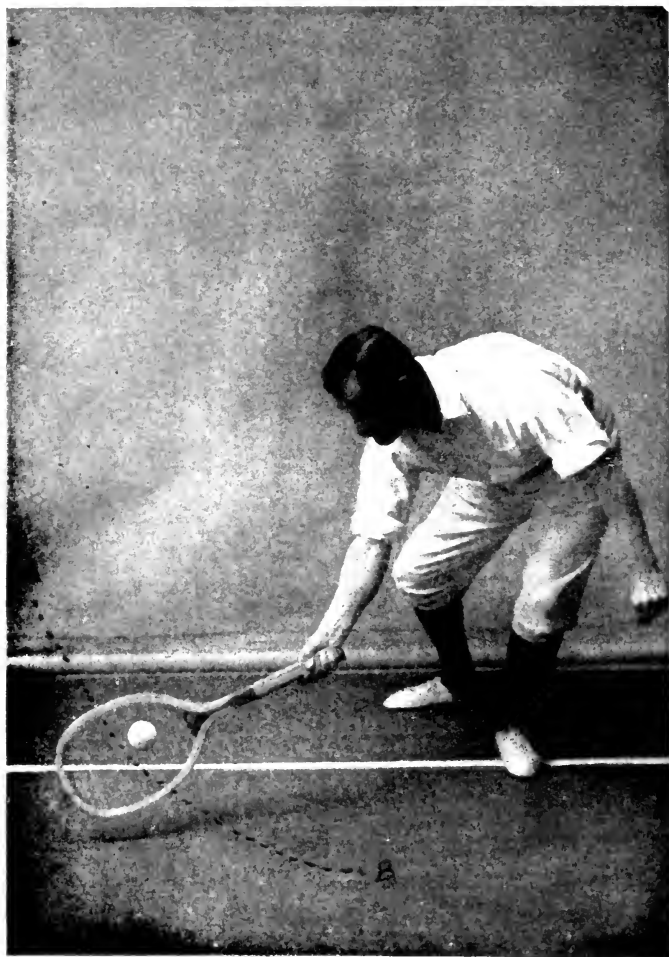


PLATE 70 LOW FOREHAND VOLLEY

PLATE 70.—LOW FOREHAND VOLLEY.

Notice the position of the feet, which are practically at right angles to each other. The ball is caught fairly in the middle of the racket—it is not yet in contact with it in the plate—and lifted over the net. The face of the racket must naturally be inclined backwardly away from the net. Some writers advise playing all low volleys with the head of the racket above the wrist. That is not advisable, in fact is not practicable in many cases. It would certainly be very hard to do it in this case. Of course, nobody should ever play a volley underhand that can be dealt with overhead.



PLATE 71.—LOW BACKHAND VOLLEY.

PLATE 71.—LOW BACKHAND VOLLEY.

This stroke is played in a corresponding manner to the low forehand volley. It may be played either as a plain ball shot with clean follow through, or it may be very accurately played by means of the cut shown by the dotted line A B. The forehand low volley may also be quite advantageously played with cut. In each case the racket travels down the line A B and glances across the ball, causing it to spin at an angle of about forty degrees as it goes over the net. This is not pure chop, of course, but approximates more to the forehand or other cut service. In fact, a very good service is frequently used by ladies, which is produced by the cut A B shown in plate 70.



PLATE 72. SHORT HOLD FOR VOLLEYING.

PLATE 72.—SHORT HOLD FOR VOLLEYING.

Many volleys, particularly near the net and above the level thereof, can be very efficiently dealt with by shortening the hold of the racket. It is not advised by writers and is not done by many players, but in many cases is unquestionably a great aid. Some of the best volleying Mr. N. E. Brookes, the Australian champion, ever did, was done with his hand half way up the handle. It should not, of course, be carried to excess, but when cramped for room there is no objection to trying it. I have no hesitation in saying that for net play in doubles it will be found very useful. The ball can be placed and cut with great accuracy with this stroke. The line A B shows how the cut which drops a volley very short may be played.



PLATE 73.-- THE LOB VOLLEY.

PLATE 73.—THE LOB VOLLEY.

This is a most useful stroke if both your opponents are close up to the net. You do not wait for the ball to hit the ground, but play it in the air, as shown in plate 73, and toss it up as shown by the dotted line A B, so that it is well clear of the other side's rackets yet is low and fast enough to prevent either of them getting it by running back. Note position of feet, balance by extended arm, flat face of racket so as to get right under the ball, and arm in line with racket handle.

THE SINGLE GAME.

I HAVE already warned the player who wishes to become proficient that he must first of all aim at being accurate. When he can return and place with a reasonable degree of certainty he may start to improve his pace. Many a player in endeavouring to bring off electrifying drives sacrifices the point, whereas by a well-placed good-length ball of medium pace he might have scored outright, or at least have obtained such a position at the net as would have enabled him to kill the return.

One must not be too anxious to win off every stroke. It may be that the ball is of such a nature that you cannot possibly, without undue risk, convert it into a winning stroke. In that case always go for length and position, and look to making your winning shot on the next return. Strive always to make your opponent play the ball so that he is at a disadvantage in making his shot.

Do not think it is necessary that your returns should just skim over the net. If you play for this you will see quite a large proportion of them going into the net. Remember that, especially with the forehand lifting drive, you may drive quite two feet above the net and yet get a good-length fair-paced return. Moreover, there is no object in playing too close to the net

unless your opponent is there waiting for your return and you cannot out-lob him.

In dealing with singles some writers separate the base-line game from the proper game, which is a judicious mixture of base-line play with volleying at or as close as possible to the net. I shall herein deal only with the proper game, as I would sooner recognise as a game playing the whole time from the service court than from the base line. The one is the complement of the other. Taken together they may make a perfect whole ; separate, they are merely halves, or portions of the game. There may, of course, be certain great exceptions, but even they only prove the soundness of this statement when they meet a really first-class man who plays the modern game.

A player should run in on every service that is good enough, and, I am almost inclined to add, on many that are not. Theoretically it is as wrong to go in on a short, badly placed service as it is to follow up a return of a similar nature, but in actual practice it frequently pays to take risks and bustle your opponent. One should get right up to the net as quickly as he can, unless it looks as though he may be out-lobbed. In that case he may risk having to play a dropping volley a little inside the service line, and not rush up quite so fast nor so far as he would on a good ball. I shall deal with the various portions of the single game under different headings. The service must, of course, be considered first.

Service.—The various kinds of services have been fully illustrated and described. It remains here to deal with them from a practical point of view. Do not consistently run in on the service unless it is paying you very well to do so. Your

opponent gets used to it, and it does not worry him so much as it will if you come running in on odd occasions, so that he does not know when to expect you. When you have discovered your opponent's weak spot, which is generally his backhand, give him every opportunity to practise it, and keep away from his strong point. You must not overdo this, however, and when you have edged him across the court to cover up his weakness whip a sharp one across to his forehand. Have a fixed idea or intention in your mind with regard to every service. Know that you mean it to deceive or place your opponent at a disadvantage on account of something that you will make it do beyond the mere fact of hitting it hard into the service court, although this in itself and so far as it goes is good—and many can't do even that. Let your mind be working all the time. Notice how your opponent stands. Coax him in on to the centre line, then whip one across suddenly. Hit the side line a few times, then smash one down the middle. Give him a forehand cut on his backhand, a reverse overhead cut on his forehand; reverse the process, and throw in an American or two, or perhaps a solid chop. This sounds almost cannibalistic, but with natural holds it is not too much to think that the player of the future will have a command of these deliveries. Mr. Brookes has them all, and other players can get them if they set themselves to learn. The prevalent hold quite "rots" the service of most English players. I was much amused by a prominent player telling me, before I had fully explained in *The Field* and elsewhere how the American service is produced, that it was "no use trying," that no Englishman could get the service like the Americans. Certainly they cannot until they alter their grip, but what an American or any other man can do

an Englishman should go very near to accomplishing; and as English players have now seen an Australian player with a better American service than any American, they will perhaps take heart of grace and make it their business to acquire this valuable means of attack. After a series of cut services, a fast straight service right at your man sometimes puts him at a disadvantage.

The Return of the Service.—The two returns generally used are a side-line drive or a cross-court shot. Your opponent will generally be running in, so you must try to make your side-line drive clean enough to get by him or else to drop your cross-court stroke sharp across to the side line. The fore-hand drive with lift helps you very much here, for it makes the ball drop quickly after it has passed the net, and renders it very difficult for the player, even if he reaches it, to play an effective shot.

Both in serving and returning, especially in doubles, the value of serving down the centre of the court is not generally realised. In doubles it practically cuts off the telling side-line shot and enables the man at the net to wander nearer the middle, while in singles its importance is very great.

Fig. 3 will explain the value of centring a return of the service. Let us suppose a player drives a ball from six or nine feet outside the base line—say at C to A or B. The return is almost covered by the man at the net M. Of course it is unnecessary that the return should only go to the extreme corner. It might pitch near the service line, but the lines taken will show the principle. If, however, the player is returning the ball from D, it is never really over the court until it strikes at A. The striker can also play the quick-dropping cross-court shot D E, which is

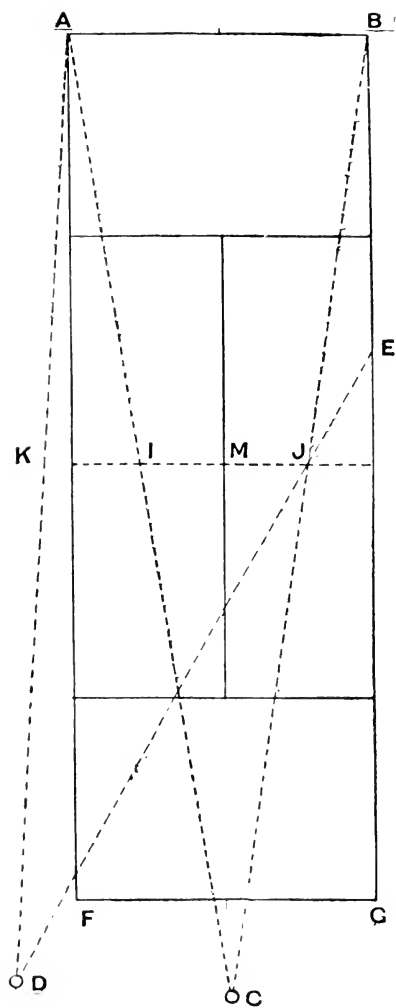


FIGURE 3.

such a formidable pass, particularly on the backhand, for it can be made to drop so close to the net. It will thus be seen that on a ball pitched at D the striker has both sides of the court open to him. If at any time you are caught out of position, do not hesitate, but get up to the net with all convenient speed. Of two evils it is the less.

How to Receive the Service.—Generally speaking keep as nearly as may be diagonally opposite the server. This may not do in some of the cut services, but you must then exercise your own judgment, always remembering to let the service, American or otherwise, *break in to you* and play it on the hand it comes naturally to ; in other words, do not let it break across you and play it after it has crossed your body. This cannot always be done, but when it can, as in the American service, it is the best way to deal with it. The American service swerves from the server to your right and then breaks back to your left directly it hits the ground. If you know that it is an American, don't mind it swerving away out to the right. Stand well clear of it on the left, and when it comes to you on the forehand deal with it vigorously. Don't pat it, or the work on it will kill your stroke. Hit it hard, preferably with a little lift, for that will kill the lift which is already on the service. You will remember that all American services are obtained by lift or top. Sometimes, of course, you will get a service that is only forehand cut and not American. Then you will be left lamenting, but that won't happen very often for years to come, for it is a rare thing here to see a player with three services, or indeed for the matter of that with two.

When you have played your stroke always make for that part of the court which is most exposed. Don't wait to see what your

opponent is going to do, but make for the open spot without hesitation. This is the soundest of sound advice. I know one fine active young player who is always racing about the court like a mountain goat because he waits too long after he has played his shot before he starts for the other place. The odds are at least ten to one in favour of it going as far from you as it can be put. Very few players consistently return the ball to the same spot, although it is a good thing to do now and again. It is, however, important to give your man all the exercise you can and to make him play his shots on the run. Never be fixed during a rest. Always be moving, or at least standing with knees flexed and weight thrown forward so that you can start at once.

Do not consider it necessary, because your opponent is running in at you, to drive at him. In these circumstances soft, quiet-dropping cross-court shots are the deadliest passes. They may be used on both backhand and forehand, and are most difficult to get to, and if indeed they are reached they are very hard to treat with any approach to severity, for the attacking player has to lift them up at the end of his run, and he cannot do much with them. When in position at the net you should volley sharply across court, so as to get away from your opponent as much as possible.

The Lob.—The lob has been very fully explained by photodiagram and letterpress. Both the lob and the lob volley are most useful strokes, and they will get you out of difficulties frequently when no other stroke is available.

You should always endeavour to anticipate the nature of your opponent's return. It is not enough merely to know what he has done after he has hit the ball if you can do more. You should study his play and the manner in which he makes his shots, so that you know what he is going to do. If you can do this—and

with most players it is possible—you will save much valuable time and also be able to economise your strength considerably.

THE DOUBLE GAME.

In the double game there are four methods of returning the service in general use:—

The Side-line Drive.—This consists of playing your stroke so that the ball travels nearly parallel with the side line. It requires clean and cool execution, for generally the man at the net does not leave one too much room in which to pass him. It is quite useful to prevent the man opposite you from getting over too much to the centre of the net and so cutting off your return. With a well-centred service the side-line shot is practically cut out and the man at the net may stand much nearer in to the centre of the court. I have seen some players go even beyond this. One well-known pair sometimes places the server's partner in the same half of the court as the server, and the latter, after serving down the centre of the court, runs in across the court to the place usually occupied by the server's partner. This is a very puzzling formation for the striker-out. The value of the central service or return has never been fully recognised by lawn-tennis writers, but that famous tactician, Mr. E. G. Meers, is strongly of opinion that it is a most valuable form of attack. In his able and interesting chapter on the advanced tactics of the single game contributed to my second work, *Great Lawn-tennis Players*, he clearly shows its value.

The Cross-court Drive.—This is the stroke where the value of the lifting drive is seen. No other stroke will give you the command of such an acute angle or so quick-dropping a shot

as will the drive with lift, whether on the forehand or the backhand. It may be played quite slowly, and is then a most trying return to deal satisfactorily with ; or, if a short, high-bounding ball, it can be driven "out of sight" with plenty of "top" on the stroke. A good slow chop also makes a fine cross-court passing shot, but it never gets to the ground so quickly as a lightly played forehand stroke with lift.

The Centre Drive.—This is perhaps the best and safest return in a double. Frequently there will be some doubt as to who will take it, and it is thus allowed a free passage ; frequently also that same momentary hesitation, even when it is played, causes the stroke to be imperfect. Quite often when there is plenty of lift on the ball your opponent lets it go, and has the mortification of seeing the forward spin bring it down well within the court. Then he won't take any more risks, and "goes for everything," so that very often you get the benefit of the doubt so far as regards your length, and as you are running no risks with side lines, you have quite a good chance of scoring. The centre drive, especially if the man at the net allows you plenty of room, as he not infrequently does by standing too near his side line, is a very paying shot, and quite the safest return, particularly for a fast drive.

The Lob.—The lob is, generally speaking, a defensive stroke, but if your opponents have the sun in their eyes it is not a bad idea to treat them to a few lobs. If when you get into the "sunny" court they retaliate, and you find the sun troublesome, let the lobs bound and kill them when at the top of their bound or at a suitable elevation for the purpose. In lobbing, as in nearly every other stroke, except when merely lobbing quickly to pass your opponents, you must try to get a good length and

keep away from the side lines. A good lob on the side line would probably be a good lob six feet inside the court, so don't run any unnecessary risks.

Each player should, unless otherwise arranged, attend to his own lobs. If he cannot smash them well he should try to get them back with good enough length to go in on, unless his opponents are up, as they should be if the lob is "deep" or well back to the base line. If they are in position there are two ways of playing it. He must either smash it vigorously or reply with another lob. In volleying or smashing any lob it is of importance that the player should get well under the ball, as shown in the plate illustrating the forehand service. If he hits it when it is away out in front of him he will almost certainly put it in the net.

The service should be so delivered that the server is practically thrown into his stride for the net by the follow through. He should lose no time in getting to the net. He must not trot up. He must gallop, so that he is in position to play the ball downwards instead of having to hit it upwards from about the service line.

The server's partner should stand up quite close to the net for the first service, and perhaps for the second ; if there appears to be danger of a lob he may retreat a yard or two, but not otherwise, for unless you are going to be lobbed the nearer you are to the net the better. Always move, or appear to be moving, towards the centre of the court, so as to cut off your opponent's return. It makes him pull his return more across the court and into your partner's hands than he might otherwise do. When you are the striker-out try a straight drive at the man at the net occasionally. Try to hit him in the middle low down. He is

often caught out of position, for it is an awkward stroke for him to make, either forehand or backhand.

I now have to deal with a very important question of tactics in the double game, and that is the position of the striker-out's partner. Quite two years ago I indicated that the formation adopted in England was the chief blot on English double-play. An English player generally stands in the service-court when his partner is receiving. I have always condemned this practice. Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty were in the habit of doing it. I pointed out repeatedly in *The Field* and elsewhere that when one man is striking-out and the other is at or near the net any imperfect return by the striker-out either leaves his partner absolutely at the mercy of the opposing net player, as he will get the ball banged at his feet or it will be placed in the great cross-court gap that this formation opens up.

Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty tried this faulty formation when they met the Australian pair, A. W. Dunlop and N. E. Brookes, at Queen's Club. Dunlop at the net banged everything at R. F. Doherty's feet, and made him look as helpless as a kitten. In the end the English champions lost a hard-fought match of five sets. As I had always so heartily condemned their formation, I drew attention to this marked instance of its weakness, and stated that no pair which adopted that position could hope to win against the American players, Ward and Wright. In that match, when one of the brothers was receiving the other stood on the base line also. This is the proper position. Once or twice they tried the old formation, promptly paid the inevitable penalty and returned to the proper formation. In a hard five-set match they just managed to win. On their old formation they would have been hopelessly beaten.

It may therefore be taken as settled tactics that the proper position for the striker-out's partner is on or near the base line in his own half-court and nearly in a line with the striker-out.

When the return of the striker-out justifies it they must both go in together, still in line and still the same distance apart from each other, so as to cover as much of the court as possible. This is quite an important point. I never had any doubt of the faultiness of the formation, and until I came to England I rarely saw it used by first-class players.

MIXED DOUBLES.

Lady players are improving so much in their volleying that before long it may be unnecessary to devote a special chapter to this game, for when they have reached a certain state of expertness the rules laid down for men's doubles will govern the play in this class of matches. This is what every lady should aim at. She should, if her strength and activity are equal to the strain, try to play the game like a man. She probably won't quite succeed, but she will play better than if she sets out with the idea that she is a mere woman and that the man has to do all the work and make the winning strokes.

As the game is now played the lady nearly always plays in the forehand court and on the base line, and the man at the net. This is the accepted formation, but it has often seemed to me that it is open to improvement. I have frequently put my partner, if she is not too bad on the backhand, on the left side of the court. She can always stand wide, and so to a great extent cover her backhand. In a mixed, the man always thinks before he has played his stroke that he can win that particular rest. Of course he cannot count on it, but that doesn't matter. The

opposing lady frequently has something of the same idea in her mind, and not infrequently the man does win his shot. His partner is then playing her shot knowing if she does miss it that it will only bring them level again, and she does not feel the responsibility so greatly as she will if she knows that missing her shot will give the other side the lead. For instance, at deuce, when she is playing from the forehand corner, she knows that if she misses her shot her opponents have secured a great advantage. On the other hand, if she is in the left court and her partner has won the last point, she will go for her shot with much greater nerve, knowing that it means a win or simply bringing it back to the man again to secure the lead. I do not really say that there is any particular advantage to be gained in changing from the present method, but the idea is quite worthy of consideration. In favour of the present formation it must be borne in mind that the lady has three good shots open to her, namely, the side-line drive, the cross-court drive, or slow-pass, and all of them on the forehand. There will have to be solid practical advantages in the suggested position to counteract these, but for some pairs those advantages do exist, and if the lady is very good on the backhand the formation is well worth trying.

While the man is serving, his partner, unless she is a good volleyer, must stand a little outside the base line and not very far from her corner of the court. The man should always follow up his service unless it is quite too bad to go in on, and this, of course, occasionally happens with the best of players. In a mixed double the man should hit everything he can reach on the volley, and he should try to reach everything on the volley. In that sentence is summed up practically the whole of man's

duty to woman—in a mixed double. He must dart across and cut off the lady's return every time he can. This makes her seek for the side lines, and frequently she goes over them, especially if just as she is making her stroke she sees the man darting across to intercept her return. Unless the lady tries a side-line pass, which she will only do now and again, or a lob which she considers *infra dig.* as a regulation shot, she has practically nothing left but the cross-court shot. Now as the man at the net is always hunting her returns as wide across court as he can make her put them, it follows that generally after her service the lady, if she is still playing from the base line, may "spread out" to at least the corner of the court, and probably beyond, for the man at the net can cover a very wide angle and force the opposing lady to play so sharply across court that her return will frequently drop somewhere near the service line. If the server gives her some well-centred good-length services it will increase her difficulty in avoiding the man at the net.

The man must stand in near the net while the lady is serving. He must always be so close as to enable him by one or two steps to get near enough to the net to play the ball on the volley before it has begun to drop, and he must be equally ready to chase the lob if it is played over his head, unless he has any arrangement with his partner that she shall take the lobs and that they shall change sides until the end of the rest or until another lob comes along.

While her partner is receiving the service the lady must always stand back with him, on or behind the base line. No matter how well she volleys, it would be perfectly futile for her to take up the position generally assumed by an English player in men's double while his partner is receiving. This for

either men or ladies is, against those who know the game, only the position to lose from.

The man should take great risks in a mixed. The lady dearly loves to pass him, and gets more satisfaction out of doing that once than she does from winning legitimately off the opposing lady five times ; but she has the fear of him all the time in her mind, so that generally she wisely tries to keep well away from him and get to the lady. Knowing this, he should run in well to the lady's side of the court, and on every occasion during a rest when he has seen the shot decided on and the racket half-way through the stroke he should charge across even unto the single side lines and cut off the return. The moral effect of his continued activity and ubiquitous interference is a very great factor in determining the level of the opposing lady's play. A good man can in a mixed double quite unsettle a lady player's game unless she is very cool and skilful. Of course, now and again the interfering man will get passed on his exposed side, but it is a question of average, and he must work it out for himself, and see how many rests he wins for those he throws away by bearing to one side of the court ; also, of course, he must not do it *all the time*, as any tactics that become stereotyped lose a great deal of their value. More than half the art in playing lawn tennis lies in concealing your intention and the nature of your stroke.

One of the best shots a lady can play to escape the man's attentions is a diagonal or cross-court lob. I say cross-court because a low cross-court lob will be much more out of his reach than if you try to put a lob of the same height straight over him, for he has to run across and get under it before he can reach it. This is what makes a low lob down the side line

such a fine passing shot. If it were at the height of your opponent's shoulder he would perhaps be able to step out and reach it, but if it were a low lob over exactly the same place he would have to come across right under it and strike up for it. There is a wonderful difference, too little appreciated by players, between these two things.

Some services nearly always worry ladies very much. They never seem able to understand which way they will jump. In all ordinary cut services such as the fore underhand cut, the overhead forehand cut, and the reverse overhead cut, the ball breaks the opposite way to that in which the racket passes across it, so that in the underhand cut, for instance, the racket cuts across the ball from right to left, and the ball breaks from left to right; but in the American services which are produced by lift or upward cut the ball always breaks the same way as the racket goes through the air. These are infallible rules, and should be of assistance to those players who are puzzled, and few are not, by the bound of the American service.

LADIES' SINGLES.

This is not a game by itself. The highest development of it must naturally be the nearest approximation to the standard set by the men. There are practically no general rules that can be laid down for lady players who desire to excel at singles that are not already stated in the chapter on the single game. Many will find running in on their service all the time much too tiring. They must therefore choose their occasions all the more discreetly. This remark also applies with equal force in regard to attacking at the net. The lady player must choose her opportunity for going up with judgment so as to spare herself

as much as possible, and above everything she must not be discouraged at losing the shot, particularly if she is convinced she was right in going up. For a long time, if necessary, she must be satisfied to say, "Well, it certainly was my rest if I had played that shot right. I ought to have won it, but I didn't play the stroke properly. Never mind ; *I was in the right place*, and I'll have another try at it directly I get a chance." If volleying is taken on in this spirit any lady with a good eye will soon improve wonderfully, but she must always remember to hold her racket firmly and *to hit the ball with it*, not to wait for the ball to hit the racket.

It is important for all players to try to get a good idea of the angles of the court. A player should be able to tell when he sees a ball coming at him exactly where it will pitch if he leaves it alone. Few are very good at this, and the consequence is that many a ball that is going out is played, and many a ball is not played that afterwards drops well within the boundaries of the court. This is a matter worthy of the most careful study on the part of any one who desires to play a really scientific game of lawn tennis.

LADIES' DOUBLES.

There is practically nothing in connection with the ladies' double game that may not be found in the chapter on "The Double Game." It will be observed that in neither case have I labelled the games "Men's," for, as a matter of fact, the men have no special monopoly of them.

A lady's double as it is sometimes played, where all four players wander round the base line and indulge in interminable rests of semi-lobs, to the distraction of the unfortunate umpire and the clearance of the pavilion seats, is fortunately almost a

thing of the past. Nearly always there will be one or two of the ladies who are able to volley, and this enlivens matters very much.

If both of the ladies can volley, then a ladies' double must be played as much like the double game as they can play it. If only one of a pair can volley, that pair must play a mixed double game. If neither of the players can volley, my advice is to go and learn without delay, for in that case she is only toying with a portion of the game and missing the most beautiful part of it.

TOURNAMENT PLAY.

Equanimity is one of the most important qualities for a tournament player to possess. There is nearly always trouble in getting umpires, and many who volunteer are more willing than able. Consequently the player frequently has to put up with the most annoying and foolish decisions both as to law and fact, and if he allows these to annoy and upset him he is taking upon himself an extra handicap.

It is advisable before any match to have a "knock up" for five or ten minutes, so that you do not start until your limbs are easy and you have "got your eye in."

Never ease up in a match. It is very often quite difficult to recover yourself. No matter how poor your opponent is, if you want to win beat him while you can, and as well as you can. The effect of easing up is twofold. Firstly, you go off your game, and probably cannot get going again just when you want to, and your opponent gets "heartened up" and comes at you with renewed vigour and hope; moreover, you may have to play another and stiffer match soon after, and you will perhaps find that you are suffering from the effects of your slack play. Particularly at lawn tennis the game is to win while you can.

Some very marvellous recoveries have been made at lawn tennis. Men who wanted but one stroke to win the championship of England have lost that stroke—and the championship. Remember this. It may come into your mind when you want comfort. Remember, the game is never won so long as there is a rest to be played. Always keep in mind the fact that if you are feeling absolutely done it is very probable that the other fellow is as bad, if not worse.

Always get a look at the play of the man you are going to meet unless you know his game. This will often save you valuable time on the court, for you have been able in cold blood to consider his play and form certain conclusions which you go into court prepared to experiment with. If they are not right, you must find others. Weigh carefully anything any one of experience may say to you between sets, as it is very true that the onlooker sees most of the game.

If you want any stimulant, take a little coca wine, some whisky and water, or any other thing of a similar nature that you are in the habit of using. Do not however drink during a match unless you are very thirsty, and then take as little as you can. You should always endeavour to regulate your meals so that you have not to play for half an hour to an hour afterwards. If you are playing a very protracted match long after a meal, it is not unwise to take a little chocolate or a biscuit. It is frequently worth more than alcohol.

PRACTICE AND TRAINING.

My own opinion about training for lawn tennis is that a player should live much the same life as he generally does. I do not think there is any necessity for any special dieting. Some men win on

vegetables and patent biscuits, and bore your life out telling you about it ; others win on half-raw steaks and plenty of ale with a copious supply of eggs thrown in. A judicious blend of these two "systems" is probably what will be found to answer best.

If you are inclined to put on flesh, avoid all fatty and sugary substances and do not drink too much, especially at your meals. If it agrees with you, a glass of ale at luncheon is good food. I use the word "food" advisedly. At last championship I was particularly struck by the want of snap and life in the work of some members of the American team. There was a quite unaccountable listlessness in their play. I was horrified when I heard that "John Barleycorn" had been shut off completely. Training as they do, I think a glass of ale every day, and "when they feel like it" a good bottle of wine, would do them far more good than otherwise—but one must not "feel like it" too often.

It is important when training for big matches to get all the work possible against good men. The amount to be taken depends very much on the man. Some men would get "stale" on what would be gentle exercise for others. So much depends on a man's habit of body and his constitution that it is impossible to lay down any general rules. Each case must be taken on its own circumstances and with due consideration for the idiosyncrasies of the subject both as to work and diet if one would do the best with his men. Training a body of men as one man is in many cases simply courting failure. Soda-water may suit one man perfectly, but to most men in training it would be as bad as medicine. I am not a brewer's advocate, but my own experience and that of many others is that in moderation ale is beneficial. So with work, where one man will play five sets every day and

revel in it another will find three sets three or four times a week quite enough.

If you find your wind is not good I should advise sharp, fast walks of two or three miles, finishing up nearing home with a quarter-mile spin, then a rub down and a shower. For a man who is in fairly good fettle much training will not be required for the ordinary best-of-three-sets match, but it is another thing if he has to contest a hard five-set championship match on a trying day. Then he wants to be as fit as hands and ale and wine and anything else that suits him can make him. If possible he should have a trainer to look after him, for there is no more severe task in the world of games than that I have just referred to, and unless a man is perfectly fit he runs great risk of overstraining himself.

I do not think you should smoke much while training. It does not seem to trouble some men, but generally speaking it is, I think, bad, especially if you inhale the smoke.

You should, of course, avoid late hours and all undue excitement. Generally speaking a man will do quite well in training who leads a moderate, healthy life and takes all the work he can without inducing slackness. I have no time for the fanatics who measure out the proteids and carbo-hydrates, and the number of bacilli a man should assimilate every seventy-six and three-quarter minutes. Moderation and natural conditions, fresh air and plenty of work and sleep, are of practical importance.

When practising, stop playing directly you lose interest in the game. Do not go on playing slackly. When you cease to be keen it is time to stop and take a walk or a rest, as you feel inclined. I do not necessarily mean mentally inclined, for you may be lazy, but if you feel that you need the rest and not the walk, the rest's the thing, and *vice versa*.

Practise your strokes assiduously, particularly those you are most deficient in. If you can get any one to toss you up some lob, smash thirty or forty every day from all parts of the court. Get right under them and fling yourself at them. Don't leave your arm to do the work, for by itself it cannot do it properly. Step on to your smash, so that you may put it away to the best advantage.

Practise all the services—forehand cut, reverse cut, and both Americans—always so that you may have these for a change from the plain fast service or the ordinary lifting service, which I shall refer to hereafter.

Then try some half-volleys, always remembering to cover the bound of the ball. Let the ball pass you, swing round, and see how far past you it is possible to snap a backhand half-volley. You should rarely, if ever, play a half-volley if by getting to it you can convert it into a volley. Two sound maxims, in play or in practice, are : “ Never let a ball hit the ground if you can play a fair stroke off it on the volley,” and “ Never play a ball underhand if you can treat it as an overhead volley.” The soundness of these maxims is obvious. In both cases you save time. This is “ of the essence of the contract,” as the lawyers say, in volleying ; also in each case the stroke mentioned as preferable is more certain than its rival. These two points are much neglected, particularly by English players, who constantly return weak half-volleys because they will not go up and make them into volleys, and who in many cases deliberately wait and play the ball as a low volley instead of jumping in under it and killing it.

Play as many different styles of players, particularly as regards service, as you can. This is very important, as you thus become accustomed to all classes of deliveries. Most men run in a lot

nowadays. Always have one good steady old base-liner once a week if you can get him. This is quite an important matter, and I must tell you the reason. You will find that the persistent rusher ruins your length. You have nothing to think of but passing him, and most of your shots, as a matter of fact, are quick-dropping cross-court strokes, or side-line shots, without any length. If you then take on a good player who mixes his game well—that is, combines base-line play with judicious attacking at the net—you will find, to your great disgust, that your length is entirely gone. The length of the English players, except one or two fine base-line players, is from this cause very poor indeed. As a matter of fact, the ladies who have to rely on their length to a great extent, and are not, generally speaking, worried by being attacked at the net in singles, particularly on the return of service, are infinitely better than the men in this important branch of the game. Their good length is as remarkable as is the men's bad length.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LAWN TENNIS.

Few people realise the high place that lawn tennis already occupies in the games of the world. It may already quite fairly be styled the most international of games. I give here by courtesy of the proprietors of that famous sporting paper, *The Field*, an article which it was my privilege to contribute to its columns, and which has since been reprinted in almost every place where lawn tennis is played.

From *The Field* of January 21, 1905 :—

THE IMPORTANCE OF LAWN TENNIS.

“There are many who thoroughly appreciate the value of lawn tennis both as mental and physical training, but these, I am

afraid, form but a small minority. Lawn tennis is a game which calls for many of the highest qualities which a man should possess. To excel at it one must have courage, stamina, strength tempered with restraint, equanimity under adverse circumstances, quickness of eye and mind to see and decide, and of body and limbs to execute.

“In this game there is required considerable strength to drive, serve, and smash, but this must be accompanied with sufficient restraint to keep the ball within proper limits. At golf the player has a stationary ball to think about and settle himself down to comfortably, ere he plays his stroke, and his opponent does not stand in front of him, with extended club and doing his best to intercept and ruin his shot ; but at lawn tennis the player not only has to put up with this, but he must frequently play his ball on the run ; as he runs he must rapidly pass in review in his mind how that ball left his opponent's racket, what it is doing in the air, what it will do when it hits the ground, and he must also from his opponent's actions make up his mind what the latter is going to do to try to spoil the effectiveness of his return, for in lawn tennis it is the duty of every self-respecting player, directly he has made a good stroke, to get into such a position at the net or elsewhere as to be able to cover as much of the court as possible, and so spoil his opponent's return. In this respect lawn-tennis singles differ materially from most games, for the players are in direct personal and individual conflict, with the same ball as the medium of strife. In golf the player's good or bad play does not in any way affect the position of his opponent's ball, except now and again by a stymie.

“It differs also from tennis, fives, and similar games in that the ball is continually bounding beyond the court, and

thereby causing much running, whereas in the other games the ball bounds off the walls into the court ; and on account of this I think the game calls for more refinement of strength than do the indoor games. To have a severe drive a man must put some strength into his work, but he must know how to regulate that strength, or it will be useless to him.

“ At cricket a player knows that to be dangerous a ball has to pitch within a very limited area as to length and width, and he is always ready and waiting in the best place to meet the delivery. It is not so in lawn tennis. The player has a wide area wherein he may place the ball, and he naturally endeavours to put it as far away from the opposing player as he can. The ball must thus be played while the striker-out is running, and it stands to reason that this cannot be so accurately done as when one is standing still and waiting for the ball.

“ It must be apparent to the ordinary observer that the tendency of British sport is to make for solidity and soundness, instead of brilliancy. I always think there should be a greater leaven of brilliancy in our sport than there is. Other nations have it, and we should. No impartial critic will attempt to deny that much of our cricket is of such a nature that it scarcely serves to keep one awake on a warm afternoon after a good lunch. On the other hand, I have seen matches, such as the last Gentlemen and Players, which made one sit up and look round.

“ I have followed sport in many countries, and everywhere the same thing has been borne in upon me. The tendency of British sport is not to encourage prompt thought and dashing execution, yet it should be. What the boy is in play he frequently is in work. Make him quick and alert in his play, and it is quite a chance the characteristic will enter into his

everyday life. Lawn tennis, I have been told, is actually forbidden in some schools, lest it should interfere with cricket. I cannot believe that it is so, but if it is I say without hesitation that it is ill-considered and unsportsmanlike to do such a thing. Cricket should require no such pampering. It is good enough in itself if played with a little more dash and a little more intellect in the bowling; but I am afraid that much of our bowling is sadly mechanical, even as is the service in lawn tennis.

“There is no game where a man's individuality has such scope as in lawn tennis. He enters the court on a broiling summer's day, faces his opponent, and knows that he may be in for three or four hours of the most gruelling work in athletics, for there is no game which makes such a call on one's endurance as a hard five-set match on a hot day. He may be playing a man personally distasteful to him; he is in personal conflict with him all the time; his best shots are snapped up at the net and spoiled; he has no sense of divided responsibility as in a double, or when he is a member of a team of cricketers. He must call up all his resources and realise that it is he, and he alone, who must by his quickness of thought and action strive to come out on the winning side. Then again there is the great scope which is open to the scientific player who understands what can be done by rotation of the ball. The full comprehension of this and the ability, by means of it, to play on an opponent's weaknesses or neutralise his strength, will open up a new era in the game.

“I cannot truthfully say that lawn tennis as played in England now inculcates all this, but I know it will do so before many years, when it has taken its proper place amongst games, and

few apparently even amongst lawn-tennis players have ever given a thought as to what that place is. I venture to predict that it is of the highest, for not only will the proper game of modern lawn tennis develop in the youth of the nation many desirable qualities of physical and mental dash, for which as a nation we are not at present famous, steadiness and solidity being more our pride, but it will be found that it will take a very high place amongst the nations of the world.

"Already the game, as played in England, is played in Russia, Germany, Norway and Sweden, France, America, India, Australasia, and all British colonies, besides many lands which I have not mentioned. Of what other game can this be said? Lawn tennis is even now perhaps the 'most international game.' I want lawn-tennis players to realise the dignity of the game, the beauty that is in it when played as they can play it as they will, and then they will see to it that lawn tennis takes its proper place.

"Some years ago at the Antipodes I inaugurated a boys' and a girls' championship. I was much surprised and pleased to see what great interest was taken in the event. I think if the same were done here, and the event confined to singles for those in their teens, the effect on the game could not be other than good. It might be held immediately after the men's championship, and the intense rivalry which would exist to be boy or girl champion of England would carry interest in the game into the family, and lead to the tennis lawn being seen in private grounds more often than it is, and to one who knows how to use and appreciate it there is no more charming or healthful adjunct to a home than the tennis lawn. Many years ago there was something done in the way of a boys' championship, but I cannot remember that

the two events were attended to, nor do I think any serious effort was made to render the event a permanent fixture.

"One of the chief causes of our gracious King's great popularity is the fact that he is an ardent sportsman, and I feel sure, were the facts of the case as regards lawn tennis put before him by the proper authorities, that it would not be long before our delightful meetings at Wimbledon would be graced by the presence of Royalty, and the patronage thus accorded would do much to make the game speedily more popular and remove some of the disabilities under which it suffers now. There is no finer game for Young England, and in these days, when the cry of physical deterioration is resounding throughout the land, every park and common should have its lawn-tennis courts, and the game should be encouraged as much as possible. So should we make of our growing youth healthier and more active and alert men and women in every way. The Prince of Wales is the President of the Hockey Association. I think we can at least claim that lawn tennis is as worthy of encouragement as hockey.

"I commend this matter to those who should move in it, and if I or my pen can be of any assistance I shall be always ready. This is with me no fad, for although I love lawn tennis as it deserves to be loved, I have played nearly every game that is to be played, and do not, as do so many, think there is only one game."

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There can be no doubt that as a game for the English people lawn tennis, or even baseball, is preferable to cricket as at present played. If I were to go out and play a man lawn tennis for three days under such conditions as made it impossible for me at the end of this awful period to say definitely who was the

better man, I should know my proper place was—well, let us say elsewhere.

The conditions under which cricket is now played are dull, antediluvian, and soporific. They are not calculated to exercise either the mind or the body overmuch, and what with boundary hits, short overs, long adjournments, and the theory of bowling at anything rather than the wicket, the game is degenerating into a rather mournful farce. This should not be. It is a grand game, and if taken in hand and modernised—and this can be done without interfering with its hoary old traditions—it will regain its hold on the public ; but it is drifting now, and unless something is done to enliven the game the day is not far distant when it will cease to be our national sport.

Last year there was formed in London an association which is, I believe, destined to have an important influence on the future of lawn tennis. It is called The South London School-girls' Lawn-tennis Association. I was present at the first championship of this Association, and hope to be present at many more, for this is a move in the right direction. Soon, I have no doubt, there will spring up other associations of a similar kind, and they will not be confined to the girls. These will in due course have their governing body, and they will be a valuable recruiting-ground from which we may replenish the attenuated ranks of our first-class players.

While on the subject of the importance of lawn tennis I cannot pass without mention the attitude of the public schools towards this grand game, the game of all outdoor games that gives greatest scope for individuality, resourcefulness, and quickness of decision—all qualities not too strongly in evidence in the average public-school boy.

It seems almost incredible, yet it is the fact, that in these schools lawn tennis is barred because the authorities are afraid it will oust cricket. They evidently, at least, have a fair idea of the respective merits of the two games. Another way it is put is that lawn tennis is too much of a game where one goes "on his own," and does not therefore call for that spirit of comradeship that the cricket club does. How much there is in this any one who has ever played, or even seen played, a decent double game will know. It is merely another instance of that stupendously crass ignorance which dominates the education of England, an ignorance which prompts men to force down the youth's mental œsophagus stale pabulum that merely cumbers his cerebral digestion while at the same time they deny him access to much that would brighten and tune up his mind and make him in every way a better sportsman and a brighter fellow. Plain talking this, and I struggled hard to keep my metaphor unmixed, but the truth is that both on the mental and the physical sides in English public-school life there are some perfectly delightful festoons of mouldy cobwebs. "Dirty Dick's" fortune would be made if he could get them. I might perhaps draw the attention of those who are responsible for this unsportsmanlike treatment of a fine game to the fact that lawn tennis has not yet ruined university cricket.

We now have the board schools playing lawn tennis, the universities are quite keen about it, it is most popular with the public, and it is barred by the public schools.

I have always been surprised at the relatively small share of attention that the game gets from the press. This, I am pleased to say, has not been so bad of late years. It is quite a revelation to any one who thinks lawn-tennis players form

a small class to go round the manufactories of the great racket-making firms and see the tens of thousands of rackets that are being turned out. Secretaries of tournaments and all who have the interest of the game at heart should make it their business to see that all matters of interest in connection with the game are duly handed to the press, for that is the way that even a vigorously growing game like lawn tennis must be assisted if it is to take its proper place.

ENGLISH, AMERICAN, AND AUSTRALASIAN LAWN TENNIS COMPARED.

In *Modern Lawn Tennis*, published during the All England Championship meeting of 1904, I very clearly and forcibly drew attention to what I considered the defects in English play, and said plainly that I considered Australian lawn tennis quite equal, if not indeed superior, to English. I clearly stated that in my opinion Australia could produce players to beat the present holders of the doubles championship of the world, and that in singles they were fully equal. This, of course, was considered to be mere vapouring by those whose experience of the game was limited.

Since then the Australian pair, A. W. Dunlop and N. E. Brookes, have in a genuine hard-fought match which ran into five sets defeated Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty, and Mr. N. E. Brookes has defeated Mr. H. L. Doherty.

I also in that book, unwarrantably some thought, dealt plainly with what I considered the defects in Mr. H. L. Doherty's game, and showed how he would be defeated by a man who "got down" to his weak points. Since then Mr. M. J. G. Ritchie, who by the way I said might, if possessed of greater equanimity,

easily be classed "A1 at Lloyd's," nearly defeated the champion in a desperate five-set match, and subsequently in another hard five-set match, wherein I saw some of the most brilliant lawn tennis I have ever seen, he did fairly and squarely defeat him.

I am mentioning these matters here as many who read this book will not have seen my other works on the game, and it will save many such the pain of thinking that I am merely a ruthless iconoclast whose mission it is to smash up national idols. My mission in this little matter is to spread a knowledge of the strokes and science of lawn tennis, and it is of importance that those whom I now address should know that one year after I had dealt with these matters and enunciated the, at that time, revolutionary doctrine of the value of rotation of the ball, practically everything that I had foretold was demonstrated in a remarkable and conclusive manner.

It was not remarkable that it should be demonstrated. That I knew to be inevitable, for I was only expounding the game as it had come to me from its home, England, and as I had played it and loved it for a score of years ; as it was played and improved in America, Australia, and New Zealand, while here in its home it has gone back, its standard has deteriorated, its strokes become feeble by comparison with the natural strong shots of old. The very remarkable, and for lawn tennis in England beneficial, thing was that my doctrine should have been proved sound so quickly and so conclusively, for this happened at the very next meeting.

Then it was seen that not a single visiting player of any importance used the English hold which I have always so severely condemned. There also was demonstrated the fact I have always insisted on, that the most important strokes in modern lawn tennis are played with cut, as for instance that king of ground strokes

the forehand lifting drive, the American services, the reverse overhead service, and the useful chop so freely—perhaps too freely—used by the American players.

There also was conclusively demonstrated the fallacy of the striker-out's partner standing in at the net in doubles, which I have always called the greatest blot in English doubles, and many minor points which yet have an important bearing on the game.

Now you may call this a pæan of self-glorification, or an exaggerated "I told you so," or anything you like. That won't trouble me. The line of demarcation between true modesty and colossal egotism is so very ill-defined that sometimes it is hard to tell where one's feet are, but for your information I may say that about one and three-quarters of my pedal extremities are on the side of modesty this time, for the personal element to me is nothing so long as I emphasise the facts in such a manner as to make you remember them, take notice of what I am saying now, and—this is for English readers—*alter your game* while yet there is time ; also you must remember that for a year I bore with equanimity—nay, indeed with urbanity—many futile jokes on the subject of the rotation of the ball, for I knew full well where the joke would be when it was all over ; and now jokes about the rotation of the ball are as extinct as the dodo, and in their place is with some a genuine thirst for knowledge, with others despair because they cannot, or think they cannot, alter their hold of the racket.

The outstanding feature of the 1905 tournament was the success of Mr. N. E. Brookes, the Australian player. His progress through the week was a wonderful object-lesson to English players on the futility of the English game when opposed to a first-class man with modern methods. Such men as Escombe,

Caridia, Riseley, Gore, and Hillyard went down to him without really extending the Australian. Then in the final of the All-comers' Plate he had to meet that sterling player S. H. Smith.

Brookes' great service had no terrors for Smith, although he was bothered with it now and again; neither, for the matter of that, had Holcombe Ward's. Many were surprised how well Smith negotiated the deliveries of these two players, which proved so puzzling to other first-class men. The explanation is very simple. He played them as he does everything else. He stood off them and allowed them to break to him. They got up high. He hit them as he does nearly everything else, very hard. His racket was not very tightly strung. Quite naturally he was doing everything right, and it nearly came off in both matches. In *Great Lawn-tennis Players* I have fully explained this method of returning the American service. So far as I can remember the score was 2 sets all 4-2 in Smith's favour when Brookes made a great effort and pulled the match out of the fire. Since then he has amply demonstrated his superiority over this famous player.

Smith then was the only English player to extend Brookes, and the Australian had every one except Smith in trouble all the time, yet Brookes did not win a single match against an American. As a matter of fact he should have beaten Beals Wright, who is now the American champion, twice, and but for his weak overhead work would have done so, but he didn't.

The fact is that the Australian, New Zealand, and American game consists of practically the same strokes, or at least the strokes are produced on the same principles, so that in playing the Australian the Americans were not at such a disadvantage as the Englishmen were. Another important point which militated

against most of the English players was the fact that although Brookes' service has more spin on it than almost any American the English player almost invariably attempted to play it too softly. The spin thus had a chance to work on the very tightly strung English rackets, and the accuracy of the return was sufficiently affected for the dashing Australian player to reach it and score. Being a left-handed player made his service particularly awkward, for his ordinary American service is of course a right-handed player's reverse. His forehand cut service, for a similar reason, is equal to a very fine reverse overhead cut service.

I have seen Mr. Brookes play Mr. H. L. Doherty three times. The first occasion was in practice, and the Australian did as he liked. He had the English champion running all the time, and won almost as he liked (6-2, 6-3, 5-7, if I remember rightly). The second time was for the championship, when Mr. Doherty was simply "thrashing the dead horse," as Escombe, Caridia, Gore, Riseley, Hillyard, and Smith had already won the championship of England for him. I must speak plainly about this, as I have done before, and I cannot understand how people calling themselves sportsmen can tolerate such a custom and put their visitors and brother sportsmen at such a serious disadvantage. It is a cruel, inhospitable condition, a slur on the name of English fair play, and must in common decency be abolished, so that the champion has to play right through the draw. Who, may I ask, was entitled to stand out of the draw when the first championship was played? Mr. Doherty won this match—if I may so insult a word—in three straight sets. He really played the greatest game I ever saw him put up. It was almost perfect. He was in to the net—not the service line—most of the time, and his anticipation

was splendid ; but poor Brookes had ricked his side as the result of his week's gruelling singles and a strain in the champion doubles a day or two before, so he was robbed of more than half his game—his service.

He met Mr. Doherty later at Wimbledon in the Anglo-Australasian match, and defeated him easily in straight sets. In referring to this game, an English writer, in trying to excuse this defeat, called it a kind of garden-party tennis, and sought to show it was not a serious match. Nothing could be in worse form. Either the match was a serious match or some one was spoofing his guests, and at the other end of the world we have an ugly little word of three letters, which may all be found in the first four letters of the alphabet, which we use to describe such a person. It will not, however, be required here, for every one who knows the inner history of these matters is well aware that nothing was given away in these matches.

So as between Messrs. Brookes and Doherty the matter now rests, and if they both meet again at any time under fair conditions, if Brookes is on his game, I cannot see how he is going to lose.

I do not take much notice of collateral form at lawn tennis, but there were two matches that impressed me very much. S. H. Smith met Holcombe Ward in the championship and simply "blew him off the court" in straight sets. Smith's driving was simply wonderful. He hit everything, service and return, and drove with remarkable accuracy. I have sometimes seen the same thing done for a few games or a set, but to keep it going as Smith did for three sets was a very remarkable performance. His placing was superb. He hit the side lines repeatedly, and some of his cross-court drives off the service and out of his backhand court were little short of miracles. In the inter-

nationals Ward met H. L. Doherty, and in the first two sets was a winner from the start, but then he had shot his bolt, and Doherty made a wonderful recovery, winning the last three sets with the loss of but two or three games. It was a great performance. Ward was completely done after the first two sets, and it was an astonishing thing to see the English champion, apparently much the weaker man, winning on condition.

Looking at these two matches by the uncertain light of collateral form, I am inclined to think that on the game S. H. Smith showed he would have defeated the champion, who himself admits that he cannot go in and volley him as Brookes does.

For the purposes of the Dwight Davis international cup Australasia is a nation. Taking the best form of the three nations, Australasia, England, and America, I consider that it is practically equal. In England there are a great number of good solid players; but I think that twenty-five Americans would trouble a similar number of English players very badly. I should expect ten or twelve Australasians after a few months' tournament play here to hold their own quite comfortably.

The first-class player in New Zealand is much nearer to first class in England than is generally known here—or there. All he wants is a few months of tournament play. Without any shadow of hesitation I can say that the finest smash and backhand drive I know are played by a New Zealand player, who himself has no idea how good these strokes are when judged by the highest standard in the world.

Both in singles and doubles these three nations are very close together, and I am hoping to see the practice of the holders standing out abolished in this contest also. Then we shall have some very interesting contests.

The captain of the last American team came to me a day or two before the internationals, and asked me what I thought should be their team. I said without hesitation, "Ward and Wright, singles and doubles. You can't very well do anything else." Neither should they have done anything else on form. Wright's performance against Brookes stamped him as being in great form, and since then he has amply demonstrated that the great opinion I had of his play was not unwarranted. He is as strong as a horse, as keen as a razor, as active as a kitten, a trier for every ball, and all the time he is racing about the court he is "cerebrating." He does nothing without thinking. His strokes are very accurate. To my mind both he and Holcombe Ward use the chop stroke too much ; but whereas Ward uses it more for dropping balls short, Wright to a great extent makes it his staple shot. How well he does it only those who have seen him play know ; but I must say that I think that the forehand drive with lift is neglected too much by these famous players. Neither of them, for instance, have as good a forehand drive as Miss Sutton. Ward does use the stroke occasionally, but it is rather a laboured and obvious shot. He gave me the distinct impression, although he said he felt perfectly well, of not being up to "concert pitch." He has a fine American service, which stood him in good stead. His volleying, especially his cross-court cut volleys, were sometimes quite wonderful. On the whole I was disappointed with the American team's play. Ward, Wright, Larned, and Clothier reads well on paper, but it always seemed to me that they were struggling to reproduce much better form than they showed. A visiting team is always at a disadvantage, and they on this occasion were, I think, not doing themselves justice. Their form, particularly in the singles, would seem to support my view.

In the ladies' game the advantage, in my opinion, is distinctly with the English ladies, although we do not hold the international championship. No impartial person could possibly say that Miss Douglass was in anything like her championship form. Her accident had unquestionably interfered with her play. It would suit me quite well to say that Miss Sutton's play is superior to Miss Douglass's if I could conscientiously do so, for she uses the finest stroke in the game, the stroke I am always advocating, and on the day was without doubt the better player ; but the ladies of England can do much better than they did last time, and will, or I am mistaken.

Miss Thomson was going quite well against Miss Sutton while she played her short drop shots, which to a great extent spoiled Miss Sutton's drive ; but after she abandoned these the game turned at once in favour of the American player. If Miss Sutton defends her title this year there should be much interest in the event.

THE VALUE OF ROTATION.

Very few lawn-tennis players in England realise the great importance of being able to make the flight and bound of the ball deceptive. The ability to do this in all strokes is of importance, but it is particularly in the service that its value will be most appreciated. The flight and bound of the ball can only be made deceptive by such strokes as impart spin to the ball. All plain ball strokes fly through the air and bound in a natural and easily anticipated manner, but it is not so with the cut or lifted ball. Its flight and bound are frequently most puzzling, especially for one who cannot tell the kind of ball to expect by the action of his opponent and the angle at which his racket crosses the ball in his service or other stroke.

This is shown in a marked degree by the difficulty the best English players have in anticipating and dealing with the American service. Soon after *Modern Lawn Tennis*, in which I fully explained the American service, was published, a prominent member of the All England Lawn-tennis Club said to me in quite a benevolent manner, as one who rather pitied the aberrations of a well-intentioned youth, "Don't you think this American service business is quite exploded, Mr. Vaile?"

I explained to him without unduly lacerating his feelings that in England it could not be exploded, because it was not understood nor played, and consequently had never had a trial, nor could it ever have a trial until the present defective hold of the racket is abandoned.

He smiled gently. I read his thoughts, and internally I beamed back upon him with interest. It is "the only way." It is quite useless to get annoyed. If you cannot see the humour of ignorance considering your mind a trifle unhinged you would get grey in a week in England. Many people get angry about these things. They rant and rave about the Englishman's insular self-satisfaction. These persons are not even embryotic philosophers. The probability is that in their own eyes are large beams which they disregard while attending to the English mores. They must also remember that the Englishman has been here a long time, and they must recognise the fact that they cannot reconstruct his lawn tennis, let alone him, in a few weeks. These two tasks will take time, but it is noble work to do, a game worth playing, so in the meantime if one does think the Englishman's outlook is insulant—this is a more expressive word than insular—let him not fret himself at such insulance, for all things are as they were meant to be, and there are in England to-day signs of

the awakening of a mighty nation to her needs, signs of a slow heaving of a vast power that will ere long burst the bonds of slavish adherence to obsolete and effete customs which are trammelling the expansion of a great empire.

However, this is by the way, and getting perilously near to politics, so I must return to the value of the American service, which my venerable friend's remark had for the moment led me from. Within a few weeks after he saw Messrs. R. F. and H. L. Doherty defeated at Queen's Club by the Australian pair, and he was fain to admit that the American service played a very conspicuous part in their downfall, although A. W. Dunlop's fine volleying was equally valuable. Messrs. Doherty are perhaps the two safest players in the world so far as regards the return of the service.

They so rarely endeavour to win off it, but are satisfied to get it back and get into position for the next shot, that they make very few mistakes, yet in this match it was no uncommon thing for them to utterly fail to get the service on their rackets. At Queen's Club in the covered-courts meeting in October, 1904, I saw H. L. Doherty repeatedly tied into knots with Anthony Wilding's reverse American service, and I dealt fully with that and other matters, which at that time were not so well recognised as established tactics as they are now, in the issue of *The Field* of October 15, 1904.

The point I wish to make is that if Mr. Brookes can so clearly nonplus and score off two such reliable veterans as Messrs. Doherty as he undoubtedly did, and if the young New Zealander with his reverse American service could so puzzle the champion of the world, surely it is futile nonsense to attempt to belittle a most valuable method of attack because a faulty grip of the

racket makes it impossible for English players to cultivate it. To change one's grip is obviously the only thing for one who desires to use modern strokes and to become first class.

There is a service that I did not illustrate. It is simply a lifting service. It is played in the same manner as the ordinary American service, with the exception that the cut is pure straight lift which gives vertical forwardly rotating motion to the ball similar to that which is imparted by the forehand drive, instead of the cut being slightly across the ball. The lifting service will not, of course, break either way, but it gets up rather suddenly and has a long bound. It is a good service, and presents no difficulty to any one who can cut a ball. It enables one to hit the ball very hard, and on account of the spin to obtain a fine length. Curiously enough, some English players put this lift on; if they would only cut across the ball more at an angle instead of hitting straight upwards they would have the American service at once with but slight alteration of grip for the ordinary one. Similarly any one who uses forehand cut can easily get the American service by altering the angle of his cut in an upward direction.

I have not dealt with the underhand-cut service. This forehand service is delivered by allowing the ball to drop until it is quite near the ground and then bringing the racket with a good swing from at least the height of your shoulder sharply across the ball from right to left. This imparts a lot of spin to the ball which skims the net and breaks from right to left of the receiver. A well-placed ball of this kind, which pitches near the side line in the backhand court and breaks out of court, keeping low all the time, is very hard to deal with effectively.

Every budding champion must not only set himself to learn the American services and the forehand and reverse cut services,

but he must have a command of the forehand drive with lift and the chop stroke. It was a popular fallacy in England for years—I hope *that* is exploded now—that cut detracts from accuracy in play, whereas exactly the opposite is the case, but cut must not be exaggerated for all ordinary work. Beals Wright, the American champion, and Norman E. Brookes, the Australian, rarely, if ever, hit a ball with a plain-face racket. H. L. Doherty undercuts nearly all his backhand shots, both volleys and ground strokes.

DEFECTIVE HOLD OF THE RACKET.

I have already dealt fairly fully with this matter, but it is of such great importance to the future of the game that I must refer to it a little more fully. At present there are two schools of lawn tennis in the world, the English and the other. The other includes the whole of the rest of the tennis-playing world, except where here and there one finds a few players who have followed English methods. When England stands by herself against the opinion and practice of the world, as in what she vainly believes is free trade, she is always wrong. So she is in this case.

Few players who use the English grip have any idea of the enormous amount of force they waste during a match. A curious fact, which I have never seen referred to, is that English ladies do not use the same grips as the men. The reason is not far to seek. They have not the strength to waste that the men have. The consequence is that they play natural strokes, and nearly always have the handles of their rackets in line with their forearms at the time of hitting the ball. The usual forehand with the ladies in England is the same stroke as the forehand-cut service described in the last

chapter. They let the ball drop till it is near the ground, then cut across it from right to left, and thus they get a very good drive, which is well played by many men, but has nothing to recommend it as a staple stroke in preference to the forehand lifting drive.

The backhand is a natural stroke, and is frequently cut heavily. Some lady players are very reliable on the backhand; some indeed are very good, and I do not know a man who has a better backhand than Miss Ethel Thomson, but she could not play it as the men do their stroke. These facts should make those who are playing the unnatural strokes reflect, and the ladies having in many cases already the proper natural grips should make a great effort to cultivate the forehand drive with lift, which really is not hard to get.

It is now many years since England has produced even a promising young player. Anthony Wilding, the New Zealand player, is the most prominent example. It has been said that he learnt his lawn tennis in England, and many people think that he would now have the championship of New Zealand at his mercy. The statement and the supposition are both wrong. He learnt his lawn tennis in New Zealand, and has merely developed his strokes in England, and he would not be a certainty for the New Zealand championship, although I have no doubt that now he would give it a great shake; but there are plenty in New Zealand who can do as well as, if not better than, Wilding, and they have his opportunities. I say this without in the slightest degree disparaging Wilding's ability, but in common justice to the standard of New Zealand play, even as I did of Australian play two years ago.

The dearth of young players in England has to be accounted

for. In my opinion it is simple to do it. The hold of the racket favoured by Messrs. Doherty is without the least shadow of doubt unnatural and from a mechanical standpoint defective. The lead of success has been blindly followed by many, if not most, of the rising players. They will never raise a great game on this foundation. One man's hold is another man's undoing. A hold which suits a man who lives at the game may not suit another who cannot spare the same or even a respectable fraction of the time for play that his more favoured fellow-player can devote to it. If one blindly follows a person who is doing a thing in a defective manner, it is probable that the pioneer of the defective method will have the advantage. These points must all be considered in dealing with this matter.

It must also be remembered in support of my contention that the hold of Messrs. Doherty is quite unsuited to the great majority of players, that of the first-class players of the world they probably stand by themselves as exponents of that hold. It has been clearly demonstrated, both in singles and doubles, that there is no remarkable gap between them and the best of other nations. The question for the rising generation to settle is, then, "Are we going to play unnatural strokes and waste our strength in the air, or shall we put all our force on to the ball?" I wish schoolmasters in my youthful days had known the English forehand stroke. Unfortunately the dull fellows knew only too well that the cane and the forearm must be in the same "plane of force" to be effective, and to my sorrow they generally put in good work on the forehand or whatever else it was.

Of the leading players of the world I may take the following as illustrations. All our greatest forehand drivers, S. H. Smith,

G. W. Hillyard, A. W. Gore, and others, observe the cardinal rule, arm in line with racket handle for all drives, quite naturally. Smith is inclined at times to get off the line a little, but seven or eight instantaneous photographs of him in *Great Lawn-tennis Players* show clearly that he carries out the great principle in practice. M. J. G. Ritchie, a strong, natural player, carries it out on both hands; so does Wilding. G. A. Caridia is natural on his backhand, where he gets all his best shots, but not quite so on his forehand, where he is much less effective.

Norman E. Brookes is a remarkable instance of the rule. His short stabbing volleys especially are always got this way, and his service, if he disregarded the rule, would be rendered useless at once. No Australasian players of any note consider the hold worthy of trial. Holcombe Ward, Beals C. Wright, W. A. Larned, and Clothier, the last American international team, all use the holds, and religiously observe the rule laid down by me, which indeed is so simple and obvious that it would seem to me an act of supererogation to lay it down at all were its continued violation not "rotting" English lawn tennis.

I cannot say any more plainly what I think of the influence of this very faulty hold. If I could I would, for it has robbed English lawn tennis of half the strokes and much of the beauty of the game, and has given us no adequate advantage to make up for the loss, unless we consider it an advantage to reduce a great and scientific game to pat-ball, and that is the only natural result for most players of retaining the present hold.

The holds in themselves are bad, but when some players go further and suggest playing lawn tennis with one hold of the racket all the time, then the height of absurdity is reached, and with any who know the game argument is rendered unnecessary.

No man, unless his wrist is a universal joint, can ever play the game of lawn tennis with an unchanged grip. He may play a part of it. That is all he can hope for. That is all the young players of England are doing. That is why for year after year the same names remain at the head of the match results, and why young players are disgusted and disheartened with their lack of improvement in the game and with their small success in tournaments.

It should be remembered that at last All England championship tournament no player using this hold, and who had to play through the draw, acquitted himself even tolerably well. I give it not more than three years to live. Then it and big-handled, double-strung, glassy faced rackets, will all be things of the past, and we shall be back again to the game as we were originally taught it, with, of course, the few improvements that have been added ; we shall have natural handles that do not stiffen the wrist, single strung rackets of not unnatural tension, and we shall be playing the game as it is played everywhere in the world except in England, whence we got it.

THE POSITION OF THE STRIKER-OUT'S PARTNER.

I have already referred to the position of the striker-out's partner, but the matter is of such importance to the double game that I shall illustrate it by diagram. I have taken the initials of the players who contested the match at Queen's Club, when the Australian pair beat the English champions, to illustrate my point, and I have used their initials as that carries it home more forcibly than calling them A and B.

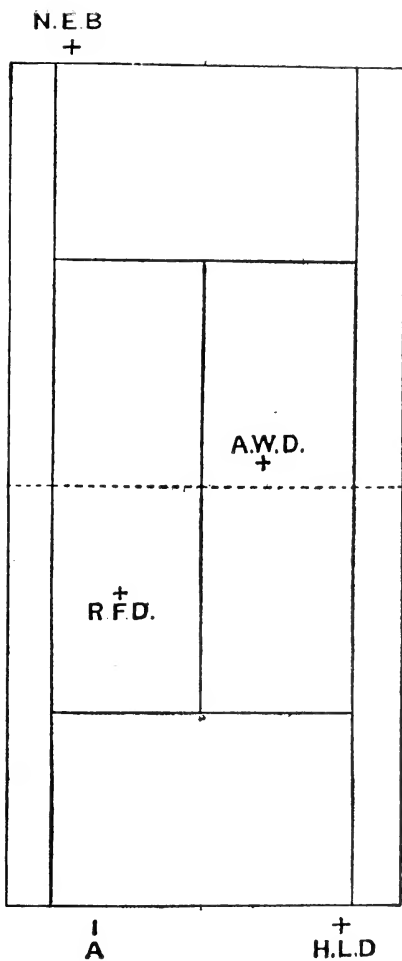


FIGURE 4.

Here we have, let us say, N. E. Brookes, serving to H. L. Doherty. We see R. F. Doherty in his usual position. If any one doubts the accuracy of this let him look at plate clxxxviii. *et seq.*, *Great Lawn-tennis Players*. We see A. W. Dunlop standing right up to the net, and well in, for he knows that, off Brookes' service, especially if it is centred, H. L. Doherty cannot possibly rely on an accurate side-line passing shot. Now, if H. L. Doherty can rely on playing a perfect return, so as to pass Dunlop, and can then follow it in and range alongside his brother, this position may be justified, but, as a matter of fact, he cannot. What is the result? I shall let my comments on the match in a London daily, published next morning, speak as to this :—

“Few who read the innocent announcement of this match had any idea of the treat that was in store for them. Very few thought that the Dohertys, fresh from their victory at Wimbledon, were in any danger of having the lustre of their achievement dimmed by the result of the meeting. Personally I looked forward to the match with great interest, for I know what a dangerous combination the Australians are. A year ago I wrote, ‘Give me a good team of Australasians, such as I could pick, and let me acclimatise them here for a few months, with plenty of tournament play, and there are more unlikely things than that the Messrs. Doherty would have to go to the land of the Golden Fleece tennis ash-hunting.’ Of course, the idea was scouted, but Saturday's game conclusively proved the accuracy of my estimate of English and Australian form.

“The Dohertys' tactics were not good, and in my opinion they lost the match on the defective position of the striker-out's partner. They always have the striker-out's partner near the net. This position is only justifiable on the assumption that the striker-

out will make a practically perfect return, which he nearly always doesn't, particularly when he is dealing with the N. E. Brookes' service. Brookes was serving well, and won nearly all his service games with ridiculous ease, thus clearly demonstrating the immense value of the American service. Owing to R. F. Doherty standing in when his brother was receiving, the Australians pelted his feet mercilessly, and also drove at him. On account of his peculiar hold he cannot effectively take a ball very close to his forehand side. His return from this position is generally very soft, and this point was largely used against him.

"Dunlop volleyed very well, both below the net and overhead, and generally played a fine game."

Speaking of the mistakes made through the faulty position of the striker-out's partner, and which, by the way, were not entirely on the one side, I said: "I am nearly tired of referring to this, as it is such an obviously stupid position. The Americans will have none of it, and I do not think any pair using it throughout the match will win the international doubles."

Luckily for Messrs. Doherty they did not repeat their error, and they just got through in another desperate five-set match.

The match at Queen's Club, between the Australians and Messrs. Doherty, was very interesting, so I shall give a short description of the play, which I wrote at the time for the journal wherein the above remarks appeared.

"The Australians won the first set in good style, 6-3. The Dohertys responded by taking the next two sets, 5-7, 2-6. A gentleman sitting by me said they were obviously the better pair. 'Taihoa,' I said to him. 'What's that?' he asked. 'The Maori for "Wait a bit,"' I replied. The Australians won the next set amidst much excitement, at 6-4, and stood two sets all. They

got 2-love in the deciding set. The Dohertys equalised. The Australians then ran to 5-2, a commanding lead. The champions, who felt the match slipping away from them, now made a great effort. They won Dunlop's service, 5-3 was called.

"Then my unknown friend spoke again: 'It's all right now. H. L. will win his service, and it will be all right,' he said. 'Don't worry,' I replied, 'that only carries it to 5-4, with Brookes' service, and that will end it,' and so it did, for Brookes continuing to serve well, and Dunlop ably seconding his efforts, the Australians ran out the winners by three sets to two, and thus set the seal on the fame of Australian doubles play. It was unquestionably a very fine performance. The scores were 6-3, 5-7, 2-6, 6-4, 6-4."

Looking at Fig. 4 again, you will see that if Dunlop gets on to anything that H. L. Doherty miscalculates it is practically a certain score for him if he hits it at R. F. Doherty's feet or puts it away in the cross-court gap between the brothers, for H. L. Doherty cannot get up quickly enough to cover this. It must be remembered that he is used to slow lifting volleys, from near the service line. It is another thing if a man stands up "on" the net and hits everything downwards. This is what the Australians did, and I never saw R. F. Doherty so hopelessly at sea.

I want to make it absolutely certain that this position must be considered wrong, so I shall give the several instances wherein the famous brothers have, to my knowledge, abandoned it to save defeat or used it and suffered defeat. It is a liberty that they have taken with the game, and it has come to be looked upon as good tactics, whereas in the modern game it is practically untenable. The proper position for R. F. Doherty while H. L.

Doherty is receiving is at A, Fig. 4, and this, subsequent to their defeat and my condemnation of their formation, is the position the brothers adopted against the Americans. Now for my instances.

1. In 1902 S. H. Smith and F. L. Riseley beat the champions. I was not then in England, but I have it at first-hand that it was on this position that the brothers went down.

2. At Queen's Club covered-court meeting in October, when Wilding and the late H. S. Mahony looked like beating them, Messrs. Doherty gave up the position and stood back together on the base line when one of them was receiving.

3. In the final for the Metropolitan doubles in the same year R. F. Doherty and W. V. Eaves, looked very like losing to Greville and Mann. R. F. Doherty, whenever he was receiving, made Eaves stand back, and did so himself when Eaves was receiving, and thus he saved the match.

4. R. F. and H. L. Doherty played this formation against the Australians, Dunlop and Brookes, and lost the match through it.

5. Against Holcombe Ward and Beals Wright they adopted the right position from the start. Several times H. L. Doherty tried the old formation, paid for it directly, wisely gave it up, and they just won in five hard sets.

It will thus be seen that they have used the formation on each occasion that they have lost. In one case I am informed, in the other I am certain, that it cost them the match. I have seen them repeatedly when pressed abandon it.

In an important match like the final of the international cup they started in the right position, experimented on their old formation, speedily returned to the proper one, and only just won.

I think this should be enough to convince any one who has now any doubt that the right place for the striker-out's partner is in a line with the receiver. When they can they go up together, still relatively the same distance apart. When they can't they must wait until they can make the opening.

This may now be regarded as absolutely settled tactics, and I am glad it is so, for from the first article I wrote on English lawn tennis up to the present time I have never ceased to point to this formation as the greatest blot on English doubles.

With a pair like R. F. and H. L. Doherty playing an inferior combination if they can win on it, there is no objection to their taking the liberty, but when less skilful players follow the faulty lead, and do much to spoil the double game, these tactics, in the interests of the game, must be plainly dealt with.

HOW TO MAKE AND KEEP A COURT.

I have laid out a good many grass courts in my time, and my advice to any one who wants to do the same thing is to get some person who makes it his business to do it for him if he can afford it. If he cannot, or if he wants the work and "fun," I must try to help him. I have already given general directions as to the size of the court, its aspect and so on, so I shall address myself here merely to the question of construction.

These are general instructions, and must, of course, in many cases, be subject to local conditions. In laying out a court the first thing is to select your site. See that it is protected from the prevailing winds, if you can conveniently arrange it so by taking advantage of any natural shelter, but on no account have any trees, particularly deciduous trees, near it.

Having selected your site, you must lay down your side line as

directed and measure out your court. Now comes the important matter of settling your levels, and I don't mind telling you that I always got a surveyor to do it for me. It saves a lot of trouble and prevents you having a court like the centre court at Wimbledon, with a drop of six inches from one side to the other.

If you cannot get a surveyor you can manage it for yourself by driving in a stake or two with a straight-edge nailed on at a right angle, putting a spirit-level on that, and repeating the operation with the other stakes. You will have to level from stake to stake by another straight-edge and then along the tops of the attachments, still using the straight-edge and level, which I am afraid you will find rather tedious.

Having got your levels, the next thing will be to reduce the ground. If you are adding the soil to make the lawn, you will simply have to straighten out the ground roughly and spread your soil on top. You must be careful to get good soil free from weeds.

If you are using the soil already there, you must, if your excavation would take you into poor soil, lay back the good soil on each side, level up the subsoil and spread the good soil again. You must then see that it is thoroughly pulverised and raked, and every sign of a weed must be taken out. When you have gone thoroughly over it, and raked it until there isn't a nut or a weed in it, you may sow it. Here I must leave you to the tender mercies of your seedsman with the warning to avoid clover as you would sin, and to use nothing but fine lawn grasses suitable for your district and climate.

In sowing you must be careful to spread the seed well with a free circular sweep of the hand, which releases the seed equally at all portions of its passage ; in fact, unless you know how to do

it, again you had better get some one who does. Whatever you do, be generous with the seed. Put 50 per cent. more on than the seedsman tells you to rather than 10 per cent. less. You should sow when the ground is dry, then roll well with an ordinary roller. You can run a brush or bough over the lawn so as to sweep all seeds into the soil, or rake lightly again. Then roll once more, and Nature will do the rest.

This is really a very general direction, but it is hard to be more specific, as the conditions in each case vary so much ; but whatever you do take no notice of the local quidnunc who advises you to have clover because it is always so nice and green, like the balls will be and he is, or some other kind of grass because it is so soft, as he apparently thinks you are.

You may, of course, want to turf your lawn. Good turf is in many places quite impossible to get. We will assume, however, that you can get it and that you have levelled out your lawn and the surrounding ground. You must be careful to see that it is well drained. In some cases it will be right without anything further. In others you will have to tile-drain it. Here again I am afraid you will want the tradesman, as so few amateurs can do this properly.

You should have at least ten inches of good soil above the sub-soil before you think of putting down your turf, and it stands to reason that this must be perfectly *and equally* consolidated all over, otherwise you will have trouble with your turf. See that all your turf is of an even thickness. After your turf is laid it has to be well trodden or rammed and then lightly rolled. You must now leave it alone for a while to settle, and then in a few weeks, when it has "gripped" the soil, you may put a heavier roller on to it. During the first two or three weeks, if there

is not much rain, you should have the sprayer going on the lawn.

Always keep the grass closely mown. If you allow it to grow long it becomes rank and thick at the roots, and this spoils a lawn. You can hardly cut a tennis lawn too close. I can remember nearly getting into trouble with a very worthy secretary of my club, who thought half an inch of grass made it "nice and soft for the feet," by making him an offer for the "grazing" on the lawns. He could not understand that you cannot cut a lawn too close unless you scrape the earth up.

Shortly after the end of your season it is well to give the base lines some attention. Possibly they will want top-dressing and re-sowing, or they will perhaps, in the case of the turfed lawn, want re-turfing. In the case of a lawn where the seed has been grown on it, especially in its first year, it is a good plan to give it a top-dressing of an inch or so of good soil similar to that which was used in putting it down and to treat this with a liberal application of some of the superphosphate or bone manures so liberally advertised nowadays.

Water your court in the cool of the evening, never in the heat of the day. Keep the roller and the mower going. These are the three chief factors in obtaining and keeping a good surface after you have once got over the initial difficulties. Carefully remove all weeds as soon as they make their appearance.

Hard Courts.—There are so many different kinds of hard courts that I cannot attempt to fully describe each one. I shall therefore give general directions which are really applicable to nearly all hard courts except such as asphalt, cement, or concrete.

For nearly all hard courts the following directions will be found to answer: Excavate the soil over the area which you

intend to put down for a depth of eight inches. Level the surface. Lay down about five or six inches of large gravel, broken brick, or any other stone or cinder which you care to use as a foundation. Every stone in this should be of such a size that it will pass through a two-inch ring. Have this thoroughly raked and levelled. Then roll it with a heavy roller—the heavier the better. Two and a half tons is not too heavy if your subsoil will stand it. Roll it thoroughly, and do not water it. This will put it down nearly an inch.

Now put down an inch and a half to two inches of gravel, cinder, burnt clay, or whatever you are using, that is about half the size of the foundation-stone. Have this spread by a shovelful at a time and sown with a good semicircular sweep of the shovel, so as to distribute it evenly. Sweep it well into the interstices between the foundation-stones. Do this thoroughly. Then have it raked and smoothed and dry-roll it heavily and well.

Now you have a very solid bed, and you must start to put on your top. Let this consist of very small gravel, cinder, or stone chips. They must be small enough to readily sweep in between the interstices in the last layer and present a smooth surface. "Sow" this as before. Sweep it well in as it is put down. Give it a good dressing, and *now* put your water on. Don't flood it, but give it a good drenching all over, so as to wash the chips down between the larger stones. Now for the first time you wet-roll it, and you can hardly give it too much.

You ought now to have a good surface, but if you are not thoroughly satisfied with it you must, when it has dried and set, give it another dressing of smaller chips that are almost dust. Sweep these well in and water them copiously. Then roll again as heavily as you like. If you are making a sand court, your last

layer would consist of, say, an inch and a half to two inches of sand, but it would then be well to have some lime or some similar substance to mix with it, otherwise it will probably not bind well unless it is fairly coarse.

You must not make the mistake of putting down too much dust on the court. Your final dressing should be small chips in preference to dust, for if your last layer is too fine it merely sinks between the larger stones or rubble and is in dry weather a cushion of dust and in wet a pad of mud, so that your court will not consolidate at all, and it will be as ghastly a failure as a court as is the Thames Embankment as a road.

In each layer you must see that you have your stones carefully graded. They should be as nearly as possible of uniform size. It is a good idea to have your court an inch or an inch and a half higher down the centre than at the sides. This allows the water to run off freely.

Unless your site is naturally fairly well drained you should tile-drain it before you put down your foundations, or if you do not do that you can make your "floor" slope to some given point and put in a few pipes to carry off any soakage.

These are necessarily very general directions, but the principles are sound and will be found to answer here if intelligently carried out, even as they do in road-making, for that is what they amount to. They are practically the scientific method of road-making which is so generally neglected throughout England, and particularly on the Thames Embankment.

AFTERWORD.

This is the third book on lawn tennis that I have written within the space of two years. Strangely enough in no case was the

undertaking of my seeking, yet I venture to hope that this latest effort will fill a vacant place and reach people who would never see or read my larger and more expensive works on the game. I have always thought that some fairly complete treatise on the modern game should be obtainable for two shillings or half a crown, and it was my intention, when I had time, to endeavour to publish a cheap book of that description. I was therefore very pleased to have the opportunity offered me of doing much more than I originally intended, and of producing a book which I hope will be the means of popularising the game and correcting those existing errors which are retarding its growth.

I have in this book not hesitated to point out plainly what I consider wrong in connection with the game. It is useless to mince matters in such circumstances, and the higher the position of those I deal with the less need do I see for cloaking my opinions in honeyed phrases. Genuine and intelligent criticism must make for the ultimate advancement of the game. I have never hesitated to give it, or to receive it. A keen critic must himself be patient under criticism. No doubt I shall require to exercise the virtue of patience. I have done it before, and shall, I hope, manage to do it again. I am now engaged in revising the proofs of the second edition of *Modern Lawn Tennis*, which has stood the test of two seasons and goes again to the printer without alteration in so far as regards the game. It is perhaps needless to say that I am gratified at the manner in which it has been received. Any one who has the welfare of the game at heart, as I have, must feel his responsibility in condemning so plainly and severely as I do the existing English methods, but I always at least remember that lawn tennis is a game. I have steadfastly refused to make a tragedy of it, and I have conse-

quently, during my association with the game in England, been enabled to enjoy many a little comedy that has been enacted for my special benefit or otherwise.

No one is better aware than I that an instructor should not tell his pupils of their deficiencies too plainly, but in this place nothing can be gained by blinking the facts. I write the game as I played it—as I hope to play it again when I can spare time—to get the most enjoyment I can out of it, and to enable others to do the same. The next few years will show whether I am right in my prophecy that the English game will be entirely altered. I await the verdict with the utmost confidence—nay, with a conviction amounting to certainty; and I am sure that when this does come to pass lawn tennis will take a new lease of life, for it will be a stronger, brighter, better thing in every way than that we have now.

With this book I have, so far as I am able, brought lawn tennis and the lessons to be gained from our international meetings right up to the latest developments, and there I willingly leave it, for there is other and more serious work to be done; but I shall never regret the time that I have devoted to what I consider the best interests of the game, for it is full of pleasant associations and memories, and not the least of these will be my privilege in being able to put this little work before a largely extended circle of readers to whom expensive books are not available.

I have frequently been accused of having made a special study of games. If I were wise I should accept the statement and look and be as ponderous as I know how to. The plain fact is, however, that I have never specially studied games, for unless a man has much leisure and little intellect there is, I always think.

better work for the exercise of his talents awaiting him. Where, however, I have managed to obtain some small advantage over other men is that I never hit a ball without a very definite object be it a billiard-ball, a cricket-ball, a golf-ball, a tennis-ball or indeed any other kind of ball.

After I have hit it that ball hasn't gone very far before I am analysing the result of my effort and its probable effect on the run, flight, or break of that ball. I am in communion with the ball until it is again at rest. It talks to me, if you care to put it so, and tells me where I topped it too much or undercut it too heavily, that I sliced it or pulled it when I shouldn't have, or any one of a hundred different things. This is all a matter of observation, and comes quite naturally—especially after twenty years of it—to any one who really has his heart in his game and wishes to get all the pleasure there is to be got out of it, for a game is recreation for the mind and body, and senseless, unintellectual smiting of a ball cannot give to any one the pleasure that another with a full knowledge of the possibilities of the flying or rolling sphere can get from an intelligent treatment of it.

I am almost afraid to speak of the mind in connection with a game, for there is a large class of players who begin to look upon you with distrust directly you hint that there is such a thing as brain-work in a game. You immediately run great risks of being taken for a "fleshless dietist" or "some kind of an unholy crank," as I heard one gentleman not altogether inaccurately describe himself a short time ago.

It is a peculiar but nevertheless well-known fact that a man who takes to "studying" any one game to the exclusion of others does develop into a crank, and he is generally a most insufferable

bore. That is what any one who takes up a game must carefully avoid. It is after all only the usual result if one's outlook in life is narrowed. If ever you are tempted to study a game, study two, and let one of them be the game of life, for this is the only one worthy of the serious study of a man ; but unless you have it in you to study lawn tennis or some other game and to see its beauties or its defects, the probability is that you will be lacking in that observation and true sympathy which is the secret to success in a study of the greatest game there is—the only one worth *studying*.

Do not, however, let this discourage you. There is perhaps no more neglected faculty than that of observation. You have a wide field before you and the hope of an immeasurably enlarged horizon to cheer you on, and as you go you will soon find that using your eyes for the purpose they are intended for is no trouble, but becomes in time habit. So many have not yet acquired the habit.

Thus it will come to pass that in the end you will realise that the ultimate object of life is not games, nor the ultimate object of games—pots. You will see that the true enjoyment of games is obtained from social intercourse and the stimulus, both to body and mind, which you derive from them. Then you are beginning to learn and to enjoy—and if you can win a few championships there is no objection !

P. A. VAILE.



SPALDING GOLD MEDAL RACKET

GUARANTEE

W E have endeavored to make this the finest racket ever placed upon the market, and as such it carries the Spalding Guarantee. If this racket proves defective in workmanship or material during the current year, return with this tag to any of our stores, or to the dealer from whom it was purchased, and the defect will be rectified. Imperfectly strung rackets will be restrung, and in the event of a broken frame, where the fault is ours, the racket will be replaced.

A. G. SPALDING & BROS.

For description and price see opposite page



Spalding Gold Medal Racket

THE SPALDING GOLD MEDAL RACKET, accompanied by the broadest guarantee ever given on an article of this kind has really proved the greatest sensation in the tennis line for many years. Our care in designing the racket at first, and then in making certain that every detail of manufacture was absolutely best quality, has brought to us players who were dissatisfied with rackets of unreliable quality, and a number of championships have been won by well known players using the Gold Medal Racket. We use a dogwood insertion in shoulders after proving to our satisfaction by bitter experience that it is far superior to cane or other material for the purpose.

THE difference between styles A and B is in the additional strings reinforcing the central portion of the latter. Handles 5 and $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. in circumference. Stringing of clearest and absolutely best quality lambs' gut. Each racket enclosed in special quality mackintosh cover. Tag attached to each racket giving particulars of special inspection.

No. GM. Mahogany Handle. Each, \$8.00

— Either Style A or B Stringing —

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THE SPALDING MODEL RACKETS



MODEL DH

WE GUARANTEE

Tennis Rackets bearing the Spalding Trade-Mark during the playing season in which they are purchased, provided they are 13 ozs. or more in weight. Any racket of 13 ozs. or more in weight that gives out from defective material or workmanship during the season purchased, will be repaired or replaced without charge, provided it is returned to us prepaid with the name and address of the sender, together with a letter explaining the claim.

CAUTION

A Tennis Racket is extremely susceptible to atmospheric changes, and the very finest gut will give out occasionally through no fault of



MODEL GX

material or workmanship; such cases are not within the scope of a Guarantee. A Racket should always, when not in use, be covered with a Waterproof Cover, placed in a Racket Press, and kept in a cool, dry room. It is a wise precaution to varnish the gut occasionally. A. G. SPALDING & BROS.

See opposite page for description and prices

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THE SPALDING MODEL RACKETS

EACH model is distinctive, but quality the same throughout. Perfect balance assured. Quality of material and workmanship the best ever put into an article of this kind.

Model DH. Mahogany handle. Extra stringing in central portion of racket. Mahogany throat piece. Frame of specially selected highly polished white ash, tape bound at shoulders. Hand made throughout and strung with finest quality lambs' gut; leather capped handle. Modeled after style racket used exclusively by some of the greatest players in the world.

Model DH. . . Each, **\$5.00**

Model GX. Mahogany handle. Gold Medal shape. Mahogany throat piece. Frame of specially selected highly polished white ash, tape bound at shoulders. Hand made throughout and strung with finest quality lambs' gut; leather capped handle. This racket is equal to the best of any other make.

Model GX. . . Each, **\$5.00**

We will supply, if required, but cannot guarantee, any rackets weighing less than thirteen ounces.

A. G. SPALDING & BROS.

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Spalding High Grade Tennis Rackets

WE GUARANTEE Tennis Rackets bearing the Spalding Trade-Mark during the playing season in which they are purchased, provided they are 13 ounces or more in weight. Any racket of 13 ounces or more in weight that gives out from defective material or workmanship during the season purchased, will be repaired or replaced without charge, provided it is returned to us prepaid with the name and address of the sender, together with a letter explaining the claim.

CAUTION—A Tennis Racket is extremely susceptible to atmospheric changes, and the very finest gut will give out occasionally through no fault of material or workmanship; such cases are not within the scope of a Guarantee. A Racket should always, when not in use, be covered with a Waterproof Cover, placed in a Racket Press, and kept in a cool, dry room. It is a wise precaution to varnish the gut occasionally.

A. G. SPALDING & BROS.

For description and prices see opposite page.



Spalding

High Grade Tennis Rackets

THE good points in the following rackets can be vouched for by some of the most successful of last season's players. In all of them quality of material and workmanship is superb and perfect balance assured. Each frame made of finest white ash, highly polished; combed mahogany handle, leather capped; stringing of good quality lambs' gut.

No. 11. The Tournament. Taped Shoulders
Each, \$4.00

No. 6. The Vantage. Each, \$3.50

No. 8. The Slocum. " 3.50

In No. 8 we have retained the old Slocum shape for players who prefer to stick to the style to which they have been so long accustomed.

We Will supply, if required, but cannot guarantee, any rackets weighing less than thirteen ounces.

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The Spalding Tennis Rackets

WE GUARANTEE Tennis Rackets bearing the Spalding Trade-Mark during the playing season in which they are purchased, provided they are 13 ounces or more in weight. Any racket of 13 ounces or more in weight that gives out from defective material or workmanship during the season purchased, will be repaired or replaced without charge, provided it is returned to us prepaid with the name and address of the sender, together with a letter explaining the claim.

CAUTION—A Tennis Racket is extremely susceptible to atmospheric changes, and the very finest gut will give out occasionally through no fault of material or workmanship; such cases are not within the scope of a Guarantee. A Racket should always, when not in use, be covered with a Waterproof Cover, placed in a Racket Press, and kept in a cool, dry room. It is a wise precaution to varnish the gut occasionally.

A. G. SPALDING & BROS.

For description and prices see opposite page.



The SPALDING TENNIS RACKETS

MODELLED on the expert Spalding shape. Frames of the finest selected white ash, highly polished, with combed mahogany handle; leather capped; stringing of good quality Oriental gut.

No. 5. The Lakeside. Each, \$3.00

No. 4. The Greenwood. Each, 2.00

THE following are of excellent quality. Frames of white ash, finely finished, with combed cedar handle; leather capped; good quality Oriental gut stringing.

No. 3. The Geneva. Each, \$1.50

No. 2. The Favorite. Each, 1.00

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The Spalding Championship Tennis Ball

**Perfect Inflation. Perfect Covering.
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The Spalding Championship Tennis Ball

ON the record made by the Spalding Championship Tennis Ball so far we are willing to base our claims for superiority, and wherever the ball is used, either in a tournament or regular play, we are certain our judgment will be confirmed. Absolutely best in every particular of manufacture and made by people who have been in our employ, many of them for twenty years and over, we place the Spalding Championship Tennis Ball before the most critical clientele in the athletic world with perfect confidence that it will give absolute satisfaction.

No. OO. Dozen, \$4.00

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SPALDING TOURNAMENT TENNIS BALL

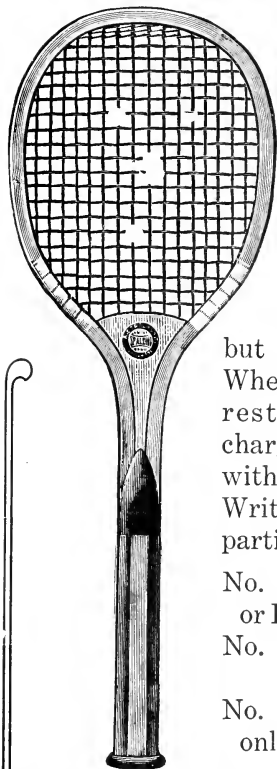
THIS ball is the equal of any of the so-called championship balls made up by others in imitation of our best grade. Uniform in quality and carefully constructed throughout. Regulation size and weight. Fine felt cover.

No. 0. Per doz., \$3.00

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RACKETS RESTRUNG

WE make a specialty of restringing rackets of every known make. The work is done by our most scientific stringers, and none but first quality gut is used. When sending rackets to us to be restrung be sure to prepay charges on the package and mark with your name and address. Write us under separate cover full particulars regarding restringing.

No. 1. Oriental Gut, White, Red, or Red and White. Each, **\$1.00**

No. 2. Lambs' Gut, White only.
Each, **\$1.50**

No. 3. Best Lambs' Gut, White only. . . . Each, **\$2.50**

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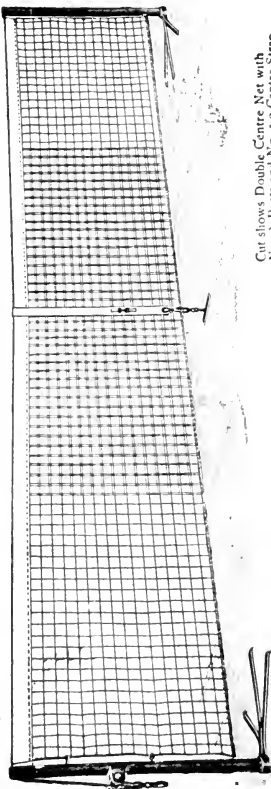


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SPALDING HAND MADE NETS

We recommend most strongly our hand made nets. Quality of material and workmanship is absolutely the best, and they are well worth many times the additional cost over the ordinary machine made styles on account of their greater durability. If posts are placed just 42 or 36 feet apart, nets will fit exactly when drawn taut.



Cut shows Double Centre Net with
No. A Posts and No. 3-a Centre Strap.

SPALDING PATENT DOUBLE CENTRE NETS (HAND MADE)

Patented December 4, 1888. Patented April 9, 1889.
These have double twine knitted together from 11 to 13 feet, according to the size of the net. Will outlast two or more ordinary nets.

WHITE, 21 THREAD, DOUBLE COURT	WHITE, 15 THREAD, DOUBLE COURT
No. 2D. Length 36 ft., double centre 11 ft. \$4.50	No. 2C. Length 36 ft., double centre 11 ft. \$4.50
No. 3D. Length 42 ft., double centre 13 ft. 5.00	No. 3C. Length 42 ft., double centre 13 ft. 5.00

We supply 50-foot lengths of 1-4 inch galvanized steel cable consisting of five strands of seven wires each, twisted tightly, but very pliable, to be used instead of regular manila top rope. Each, \$1.25

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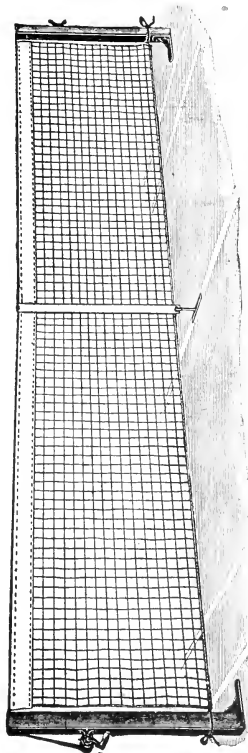
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Cut shows Canvas Bound Net with
No. C Posts and No. 2-0 Centre Strap.

SPALDING CANVAS BOUND NETS (HAND MADE)

Spalding Intercollegiate Nets

Extra wide canvas strip at the top, same style and quality as used at Newport and all championship events.

Double Court, 42 feet, 21 thread, hand made.

No. 3E. Each, \$4.50

Double Court, 36 feet, 21 thread, hand made.

No. 2E. Each, \$4.00

Spalding Canvas Bound Nets

Top bound with heavy 2-inch canvas strip.

Double Court, hand made, 42 feet, 21 thread, white.

No. 3B. Each, \$4.00

Double Court, hand made, 36 feet, 21 thread, white

No. 2B. Each, \$3.50

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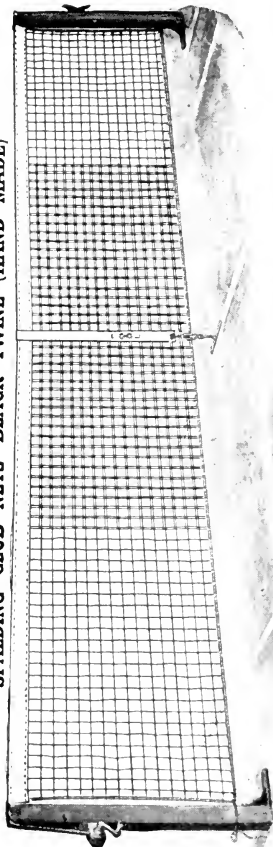
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SPALDING CLUB NETS—BLACK TWINE (HAND MADE)



Cut shows Club Net with No. B Posts and
No. 3-0 Centre Strap

Black nets supplied by us were used in some of the most important tournaments last season and gave perfect satisfaction. Players appreciate the advantage which a black net gives in showing out the white ball more distinctly while playing. Nets are dyed with fast coloring matter and by a special process which adds to their durability. Bound at top with a doubled band of 8 ounce white duck, 3 inches wide, and equipped with heavy tarred manila ropes at top and bottom.

EACH	EACH
No. 2-0. 36 ft., 21 thread, double centre 11 ft. \$6.00	No. 4-0. 36 feet, 30 thread, single centre. \$6.50
No. 3-0. 42 ft., 21 thread, double centre 13 ft. 6.50	No. 5-0. 42 feet, 30 thread, single centre. 7.00
We supply 50-foot lengths of 1-4 inch galvanized steel cable consisting of five strands of seven wires each, twisted tightly, but very pliable, to be used instead of regular manila top rope.	
	Each, \$1.25

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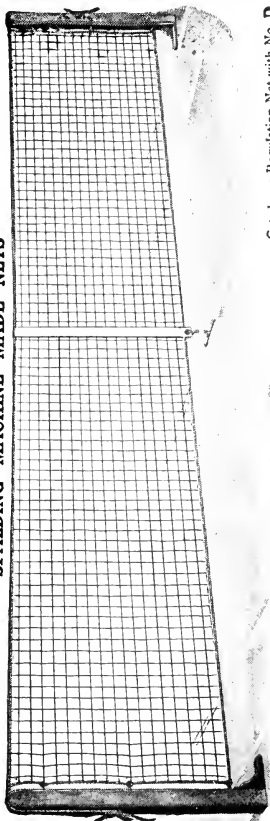
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SPALDING MACHINE MADE NETS



Cut shows Regulation Net with No. D Posts and No. 2-0 Centre Strap

Top and Bottom Bound with Heavy Cotton Rope—White

No. 1. Single Court, 27 feet, 12 thread. Each, \$.75 | No. 2. Double Court, 36 feet, 15 thread. Each, \$ 1.00
No. 3. Double Court, 42 feet, 15 thread. Each, \$ 1.50

Top Bound with Heavy 2-inch Canvas Strip—White

No. 2A. Double Court, 36 feet, 15 thread. Each, \$ 2.00 | No. 3A. Double Court, 42 feet, 15 thread. Each, \$ 2.25

TWINE NETS FOR BACKSTOPS—WITHOUT POLES

No. 4. White, 50 ft. long, 7 ft. high, 9 thread. \$ 2.50	No. 5X. Tarrad 50 ft. long, 8 ft. high, 12 thread. \$ 3.50
No. 5. White, 50 ft. long, 8 ft. high, 12 thread. 3.00	No. BS. Backstop Net Poles only; wooden. 1.00

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SPALDING CHAMPIONSHIP TENNIS POSTS

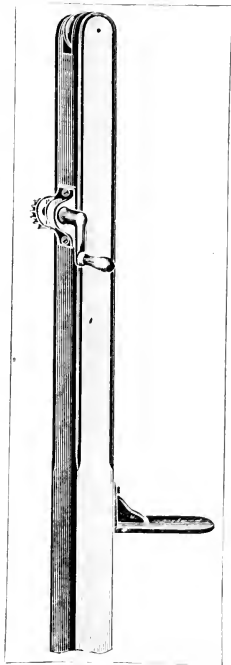
THIS style post is really the most practicable ever made. Expert players who have taken part in national and other tournaments will recognize in it an old friend, improved in some respects and just as reliable as ever. Uprights are made of heavy 2-inch japanned iron piping, pointed at lower end so as to go 24 inches into ground and equipped with wheel at top. Ratchet for tightening net is of an improved style, neat in appearance but with a particularly strong leverage. Iron hooks and cleats for fastening ropes.

One of the special features of this style post, outside of the ratchet, is the method of ensuring absolute rigidity when net is in position. By means of triple claw clutches made of heavy wrought iron, there can be no shifting or shaking once they are placed in position, and the tighter the net is drawn the more rigid the posts become.

No. A. Per pair, \$20.00

==

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Spalding Club Tennis Posts

TO insure absolute rigidity, a prime requisite in a tennis post, it is really necessary that some part of the post itself should go into the ground. Our experience has taught us the futility of endeavoring to provide fastenings which do not embrace this idea, and we believe that the vast majority of those who have anything to do with the care of a tennis court will agree with us in this statement.

Our club Tennis Posts are made of best quality 2 3/4 inch square ash, nicely polished and varnished, equipped with japanned braces so as to make posts absolutely rigid, and when set in position the posts extend 24 inches into the ground.

We call particular attention to the extra heavy brass ratchet with which we equip this style post. It is made after an English design and is the same as supplied by our London House to some of the best clubs in great Britain.

No. B. Per pair, \$10.00

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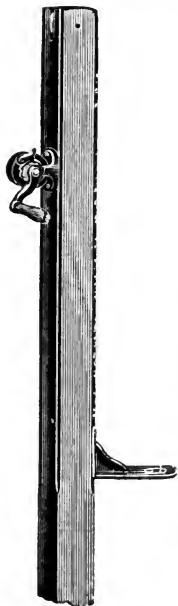
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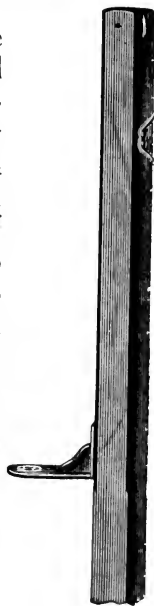
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Spalding Casino Tennis Posts



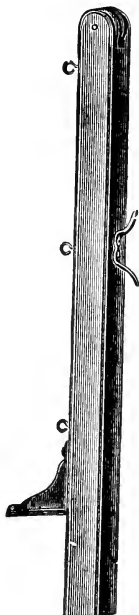
¶ Extra heavy square wood posts, painted red and nicely varnished and striped. Pulley wheel at top of each post to take top cord of net and reel of improved pattern to tighten net fastened to one post. Has extra heavy japanned iron brackets to steady posts and extends 24 inches into the ground when set up.



No. C. Casino Posts.
Per pair, \$6.00

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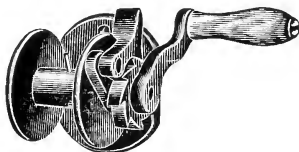


Spalding Tennis Posts

Square posts of wood, handsomely painted in red with black striping; japanned iron bracket bases to steady poles, which are inserted 24 inches into the ground. No guy ropes necessary.

No. D. Per pair, \$4.00

Reel for Tennis Posts



Improved pattern, japanned finish, wooden handle.

No. R. Each, \$1.50

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Spalding Tennis Poles

Finely polished, solid, spiked tennis poles. Packed complete with guy ropes and pegs.

No. E. Per pair, \$2.00

Good quality solid tennis poles. Packed complete with guy ropes and pegs.

No. F. Per pair, \$1.00

INDOOR TENNIS POLES

Made with iron base and spike to fit into iron plates in the floor. Complete with plates, tees, guy ropes and everything necessary for setting up.

No. G. Per pair, \$2.50

GUY ROPES AND PEGS

FOR TENNIS NETS

- | | | | |
|--------|---------------------------|-------|---------------|
| No. 1. | Hemp ropes, plain pegs. | . . . | Per set, 25c. |
| No. 2. | Cotton ropes, plain pegs. | . . . | " 50c. |
| No. 3. | Cotton ropes, fancy pegs. | . . . | " 85c. |

No. 3 will answer for backstop nets.

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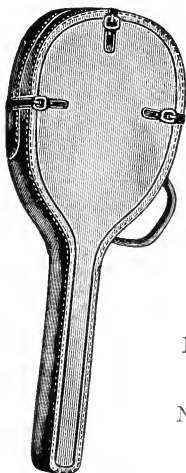
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Spalding Racket Covers.



No. 3

No. 0. Brown and mixed colored canvas cover, full size.
Each, 35c.

No. 1. Soft felt cover, full size.
Each, 50c.

No. 2. Good quality moleskin cover; well made and full size.
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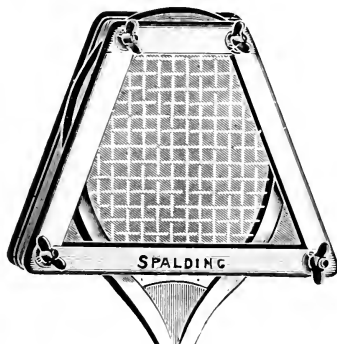
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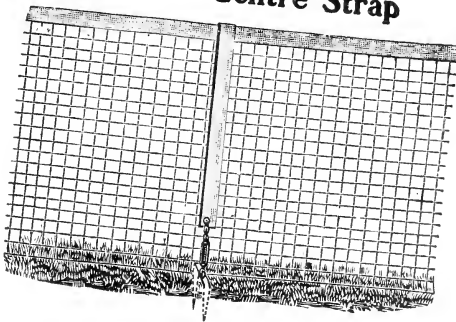
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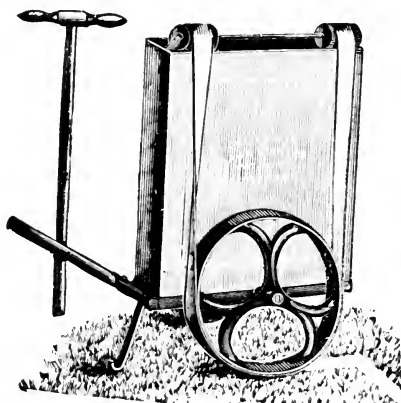
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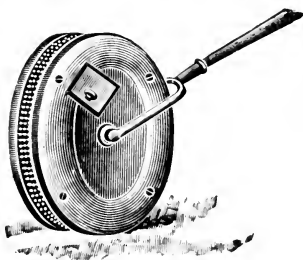
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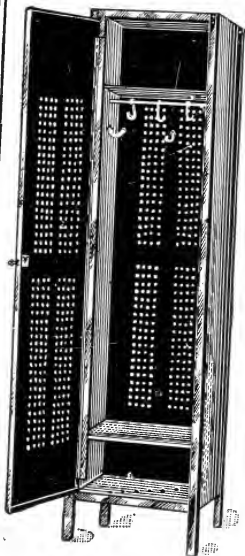
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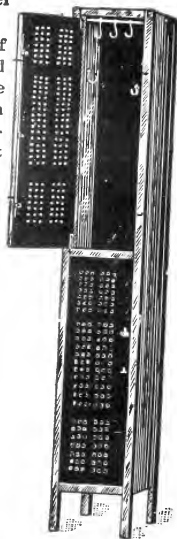
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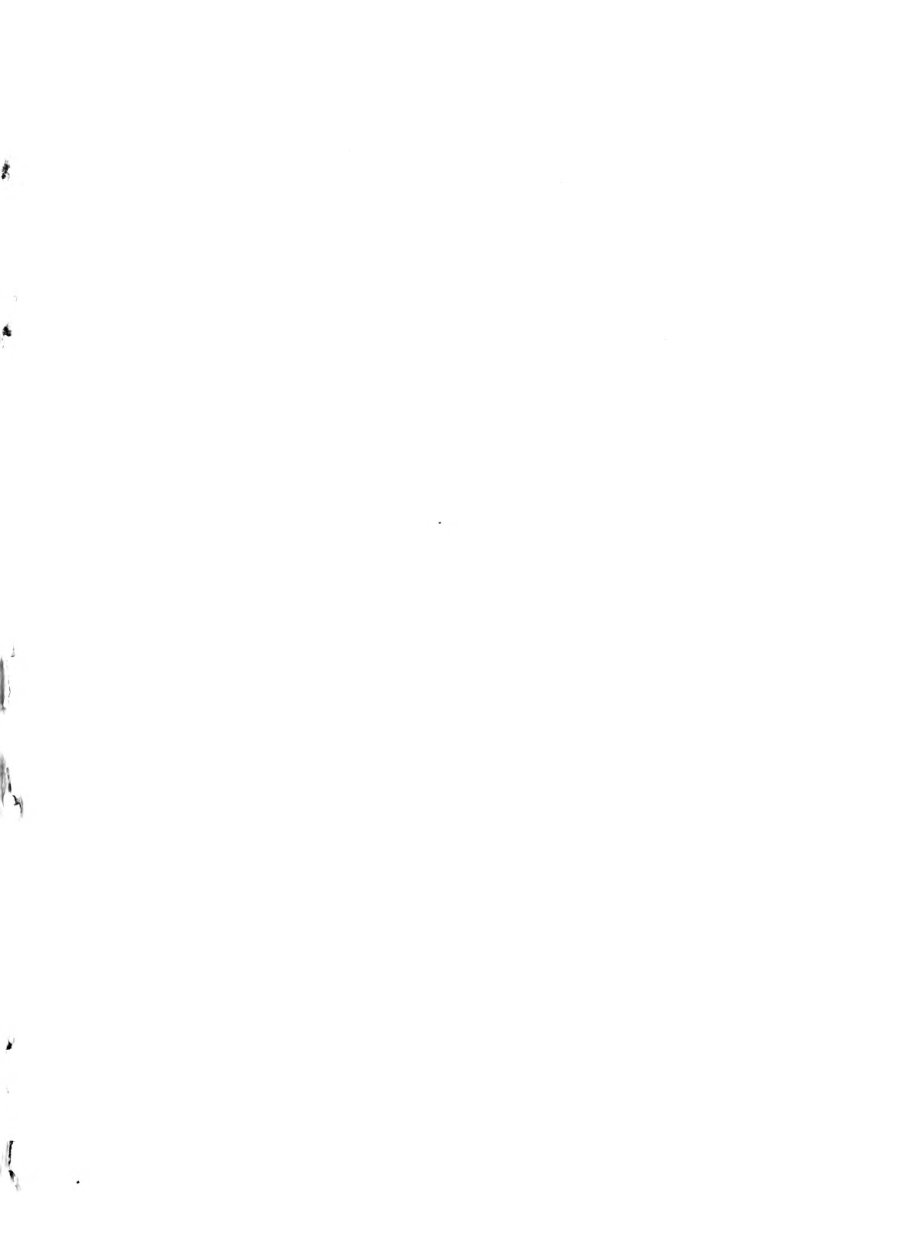
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